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ABSTRACT

The CAG "Communicator" focus is on serving gifted students in California. This document consists of the four issues of "communicator" issued during 1997. Featured articles include: (1) "The Gifted Student At Risk. It Can't Be True" (Judy Roseberry); (2) "Tech Net-Technology and At-Risk Students" (Judy Lieb); (3) "Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Gifted Girls" (Marilyn Morrison); (4) "Gifted At Risk Strikes Home" (Anonymous); (5) "Examining Claims about Gifted Children and Suicide" (Tracey Cross); (6) "Psychological Autopsy Provides Insight into Gifted Adolescence" (Tracey Cross); (7) "Ten Schools Program" (Angel Barrett); (8) "All I Know about Parenting a Gifted Child I Learned from 'Star Trek'" (Carolyn M. Callahan); (9) "Work, Interests, and Love: Developing Your Strengths and Talents" (Sally M. Reis); (10) "The Growing Problem of Gifted Underachievers" (Terrence W. Brown); (11) "Minding Your Own Resource: A Team Approach To Raising a Gifted Child" (Bev Mast); (12) "Writing Standards To Meet the Needs of GATE Students" (Catherine Barkett); (13) "The Internet and Gifted Students: Making the Connections" (Karen Krupnick); (14) "So My Child Is Gifted--What Now?" (Joan Franklin Smutny); (15) "Homeschooling--Is It Right for You?" (B. J. Darr); (16) "Alternative Assessment: Coming Closer To Measuring Learning" (Barbara Clark); (17) "Magnet Schools Offer Option for Gifted Students" (Kriste Mencher); (18) "Our Son Did Not Come with an Instruction Book: The Story of Our Search to Help Our Gifted Learning Disabled, ADD Son" (Sheila Moskowitz); (19) "College and Beyond: Access and Success for Students with Learning and Attention Disabilities" (Madeleine Brandli and Kathleen Pommer); (20) "Double Confusion: When a Child Is Twice Exceptional" (Marcia Dijiosia); and (21) "Highly Gifted Students: A Report from the Trenches" (Bruce Saunders). Each issue includes a lesson plan designed to develop creativity in gifted students. (CR)

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VOLUME 28, NUMBERS 1-4

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COMMUNICATOR

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

VOLUME 28, NO 1, WINTER 1997

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

GIFTED AT RISK

The Gifted Student At Risk...It Can't Be True
Award-winning educator Judy Roseberry explodes the myths that gifted youngsters cannot be at risk.

Tech Net - Technology and At-Risk Students
Tech Net associate editor Judy Lieb catalogs computer and video programs which can engage students who may not be reached using traditional methods.

Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Gifted Girls
Parent associate editor Marilyn Morrison reviews this important book.

Gifted At Risk Strikes Home
A personal perspective from a parent and educator about a gifted son.

Examining Claims About Gifted Children and Suicide
The latest research is provided on this tragic topic.

Psychological Autopsy Provides Insight Into Gifted Adolescence
More current information on this important age group.

Ten Schools Program
Curriculum associate editor Angel Barrett describes a program which identifies and teaches at-risk gifted.

The Gifted Student At Risk...It Can't Be True

BY JUDY ROSEBERRY

Martine is eight years old. His classroom teacher took an interest in him and gave him books to read at home. She referred him to a potentially gifted program in the district, and he was accepted based on recommendations. His attendance was not really very good because he often had to stay home with his little brothers and sisters or didn't have clothes to wear.

Martine's neighborhood is dangerous—he sleeps below the windowsill to avoid drive-by shots. His academic interests are high, but survival is number one. He is eager to learn but has moved from district to district, sometimes taught in English and sometimes taught in Spanish. He speaks a mixture of the two languages and is often ashamed of his words and accent. He offers little in class but seems to understand much. The teacher doesn't call on him because she doesn't want to embarrass him.

His older brother is in trouble with the law and has spent time in juvenile hall. His parents are very embarrassed about this. Martine has responsibility for younger siblings after school because his parents work all the time. His parents don't visit school. They speak very little English.

When the GATE teacher took him under her wing, Martine blossomed. He felt proud of himself and was beginning to take on a natural style of leadership, no doubt learned in the home. He was refining his English based on experiences in class. The teacher made home calls to be sure Martine's parents knew how well he was doing.

Then one day he was gone. The family moved on, and it is not known where he is or if his intel-

See GIFTED STUDENT AT RISK 28

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LETTERS

Teaching Kids to Vote

The Fall *Communicator*, on page 7, asks whether we involve our children in politics.

My husband and I do, in many of the usual ways. But one thing I do is probably less usual. Ever since my children were small, I took them with me to vote and always asked the precinct inspector if they might vote on a Demonstration Ballot. These are dummy ballots that the polling place workers can use to show a newly registered person how to use the voting machines.

If the polling place is not busy, usually the workers are delighted to let the children "vote." When mine were preschool-aged they thought they were actually voting and were always very serious about it and pleased with themselves. Now that they are in the upper elementary grades they know, of course, that their "votes" don't count, but they still enjoy working the machines and are extremely eager for the day when their votes will really be recorded.

My parents have always taken an active interest in politics. In early childhood I accompanied them to the precinct office where I helped stuff envelopes, and in my teens I researched candidates on my own and helped out in local campaigns in a variety of ways. Thanks to exciting and fond memories of the early start my parents gave me, I remain an activist today and hope to pass this legacy on to my children.

Gila Jones
San Juan Capistrano, CA

Olympian Offers "One More Hour" For Student Leaders

BY CAROL BROWN SPENCER, CAG Executive Director

There's good news awaiting Sacramento's middle and high school children. Gold Medal Gymnast Peter Vidmar will follow his plenary presentation at CAG's annual conference with a second, one-hour presentation for area youth.

CAG Board Member Nancy Craig has invited local GATE Coordinators to select a number of school site representatives to attend the presentation. "We expect our Coordinators to extend this opportunity to students who exhibit leadership qualities and high achievement," she said. Site reps will come from middle and high school sites.

Each participant will receive a personalized certificate acknowledging their selection as a site representative to the student leadership presentation.

Peter Vidmar was the USA Team Captain in the 1984 Olympics and led his teammates to this country's first gold medal in gymnastics. He remains the highest scoring gymnast in the history of the USA Olympic gymnastics.

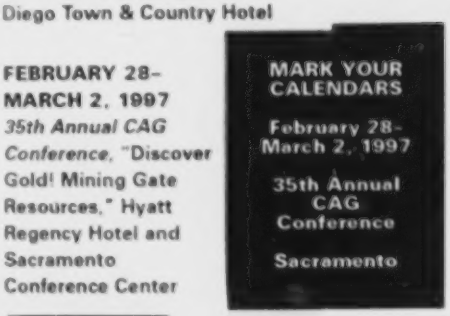
A former gifted student himself, Vidmar is a strong advocate for the GATE program and a fine role model for the G/T student.

Vidmar's presentation to the students begins at 11 A.M. and follows his presentation to the full conference on "Risk, Originality, and Virtuosity." His live demonstration on the pommel horse is a world class performance destined to leave a lasting impression. ■

CALENDAR

JANUARY 10–12, 1997
CAG Board Meeting. San Diego Town & Country Hotel

FEBRUARY 28–MARCH 2, 1997
***35th Annual CAG Conference*, "Discover Gold! Mining Gate Resources," Hyatt Regency Hotel and Sacramento Conference Center**



APRIL 18–20, 1997
CAG Board Meeting. LAX Hilton, Los Angeles

JUNE 6–8, 1997
CAG Board Meeting. Santa Clara Westin Hotel

JULY 7–18, 1997
The University of Connecticut Confratute '97 in Storrs, CT. "Developing 'Giftedness' in *All* of Our Students." To be placed on the mailing list for future brochures, contact Confratute '97, University of Connecticut, 364 Fairfield Road, U-7, Storrs, CT 06269-2007. Or visit on the web at www.ucc.uconn.edu/-wwwgt.

MARGARET GOSFIELD

The term "Gifted At Risk" sounds like an oxymoron. Gifted students have so many advantages; surely they can't be at risk. This is a common assumption on the part of many who are not familiar with the lives of gifted children.

In 20 years of teaching and more than 3,000 students, I had only one who committed suicide—he was gifted. The only other students I worried about seriously in regard to possibly committing suicide were also gifted. As a classroom teacher, I saw gifted students at risk every year. Some of them had learning disabilities with the extra burden of their particular disability added to that of being gifted. Some were such perfectionists that they suffered failure for not turning in work rather than submitting products that did not meet their own standards. Others struggled with ostracism from other students because they didn't fit into the conventional norm of social behavior. Still others experienced abuse or family dysfunction at home. Being gifted does not grant one immunity from any of the usual problems of childhood and adolescence; it may even accentuate them.

As a district GATE coordinator, I have listened to countless stories from parents who are desperately looking for assistance in trying to help their gifted children, children who are struggling to cope with the stresses thrust upon them due to their giftedness.

In our efforts to develop differentiated academic programs for gifted students, we argue that the gifted child is so different from the norm in intellectual ability that curriculum must be modified to appropriately meet the special needs of these gifted children. In the same manner, we need to recognize that gifted children's social and emotional needs are often different from the norm as well. If we do not address these special needs, we will continue to lose the potential of gifted children to live lives of personal satisfaction as well as lives that will contribute to society at large. We will lose them as underachievers, as school dropouts, as suicide victims, and as juvenile delinquents.

It is important that CAG continue to focus attention on the social and emotional needs of gifted students through our publications. We also need to emphasize school counseling programs for gifted students, to include social and emotional needs of gifted students in teacher training, and to provide opportunities for parents to gain skills in working with their children. We invite you to attend the upcoming CAG conference in Sacramento where many sessions will be devoted to this topic.

Wouldn't it be nice if someday the term "Gifted At Risk" really did become an oxymoron. ■

Discover Gold!

There's gold in them thar' hills!

Don't miss CAG's 35th Annual Conference at the Sacrameto Convention Center and Hyatt Regency Hotel, February 28–March 3, 1997.

FROM THE EDITOR

VICKI BORTOLUSSI

Two recent instances with the educational community displays a sad comment on what is not known and or accepted about even the concept of gifted at-risk students. One occurred in defending a mini-grant proposal to serve this population; some of the educators involved in making the decision said that this group did not qualify to receive funds because gifted students could not be disadvantaged in any way. After all, these studeats were gifted; they did not need special programs or curriculum development. Education took place with these educators to explain that any student, gifted or not, could be economically disadvantaged, disabled, or even at risk. These conditions had nothing to do with the child's gifts or high intelligence and potential. To help solve this misperception, part of the grant, which was eventually awarded, included a presentation by Judy Roseberry which began the grant committee's work.

A second misperception has arisen in discussion about the granting of credit for college work to fulfill high school graduation requirements. As one college professor stated, "If the college course is good enough to be accepted at Stanford, one would expect that it would be good enough to be accepted for high school graduation requirements." When it was explained that sometimes students need to leave the high school, even if only to take one class, if something is not working right for the student, especially if the student might be at risk, such as in the case of the gifted at risk. One high school administrator, who opposes the policy of granting high school credit for college work, challenged the notion that such a group existed. Who are these students? What is the research? How do you know there is such a need?

Perhaps this issue of the *Communicator* can help answer these questions and more. Beginning with Judy Roseberry's comprehensive piece, one will discover indeed the gifted at risk can be true. Marilyn Morrison reviews an excellent book on the topic of gifted at-risk girls. Judy Lieb provides technology for the at-risk student. The latest research on gifted students and the at-risk behavior of suicide is given in two articles by Tracy Cross. Angel Barrett gives one educational solution to the at-risk gifted problem in the Ten Schools Program.

Sprinkled throughout the issue are tips and strategies for parents and educators. Linda Brug's Young People's Pullout provides a respite from the topic and illustrates the creative gift which must be nurtured and supported.

This At-Risk issue of the *Communicator* was difficult; the topic is not an easy one. Yet the risk is too great not to deal with it. Perhaps the Gifted At Risk issue will touch and enlighten. The risk is so great, the loss could be so profound. We all must take the risk to meet the challenge of this fragile population. ■

CAG Conference Highlights

BY CAROL BROWN SPENCER, CAG Executive Director

CAG's Technology/Multimedia Room

Enter a novice, exit a high tech pioneer

Pioneer Electronics and CAG are co-sponsoring a multimedia workshop where knowledgeable educators and their students will help you design strategies to incorporate technology into your GATE program.

Step into your own hands-on station and explore a variety of projects using HyperStudio and ExploreR laserdiscs. Your personalized assistance in the Tech Room is free of charge to all conference registrants.

Pioneer Electronics is a leader in the field of laser players and multimedia applications.

Meet the Author, Dean Keith Simonton

The CAG Conference has something for everyone. And that includes bookworms like us.

Author Dean Keith Simonton will host a signing and discussion of his book, *Greatness: Who Makes History and Why.*

Bring your underlined copy of Simonton's book along with your questions and observations and join in a discussion with the author. The book is available for about $39.95 by special order from your local retail book dealer. Ask for ISBN 0-8986-2370-7. It's also available in paperback for $19.95. Ask for ISBN 0-8986-2201-8.

Teacher Institute Alumni Reception

If you've participated in a CAG Teacher Institute within the last two years, don't miss the chance to join your colleagues in launching CAG's Differentiated Curriculum Network. Come share your experiences in differentiating. Then become a member of the network.

One-Day Pre-Conference

No time to attend the full conference? Friday's one-day pre-conference is a bargain for busy administrators, educators, and school board members who can't commit themselves to the full weekend.

This year CAG has invited two nationally known figures from the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented to lead you in a day of interactive learning.

Carolyn Callahan, University of Virginia, and Sally Reis, University of Connecticut, will discuss their findings on issues related to program practices, underachievement, identifying academically diverse students, and serving students who are both gifted and learning disabled.

The pre-con is scheduled for Friday, February 28, 1997 at the Sacramento Hyatt Regency, 8:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m. Your cost is $75 for conference registrants; $90 for pre-conference only. Light lunch and materials are included. ■

BOOK REVIEW

REVIVING OPHELIA: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls

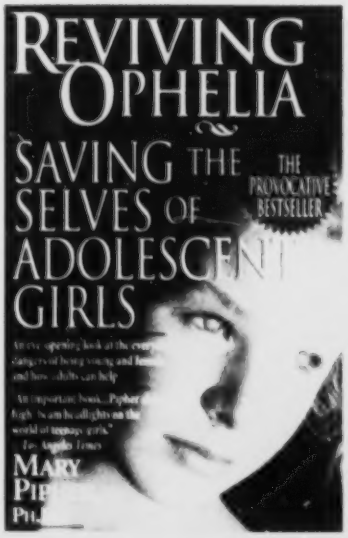
By Mary Pipher, PH.D.

REVIEWED BY MARILYN MORRISON

Adolescent girls in the 1990s face a completely different set of pressures than their mothers did growing up in the 1950s. According to Mary Pipher in *Reviving Ophelia* (Ballantine Books, 1994), girls today "are coming of age in a more dangerous, sexualized and media-saturated culture." Our culture puts pressure on young girls to be pretty, thin, and popular at a time in their lives when they are struggling to discover who they are and what they can become.

Although the intensity of the problem varies from girl to girl, all adolescent girls are facing a time of complex developmental changes—physical, emotional, intellectual, academic, social, and spiritual—all happening at the same time. Pipher compares adolescence (anywhere from age nine to 16) to a "hurricane"—while some girls survive the storm better than others, no girls escape. This book is an invaluable guide for parents and teachers who are dealing with adolescent girls. It clearly describes the problems and offers some practical solutions, as well as thought-provoking suggestions for changing the destructive forces in our culture. An excellent, easy-to-read book, *Reviving Ophelia* also contains important insights into why bright, gifted girls are especially at risk.

Ophelia, from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, "died because she could not grow. She became the object of others' lives and lost her true subjective self." Pipher, a clinical psychologist, wrote this book after seeing an increasing number of adolescent girls in therapy and observing her own teenage daughter. (She did not write about boys because she has had only limited experience with them.) Pipher recognized that "the way girls handle the problems of adolescence can have implications for their adult lives" and that "we need to change society if we are to produce healthy young women."



REVIVING OPHELIA
Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls
By Mary Pipher, Ph.D.
Ballantine Books, 304 pp.

Reviving Ophelia sends a clear message that the pressures facing adolescent girls in the 1990s are much different than they were 40, 30, or even 10 years ago. Sexuality, drugs, alcohol, sexual violence, and anorexia are issues that all girls deal with now. Pipher explains that the role of parents has changed as well: "Parents used to help their children fit into the culture. Now many parents fight against the cultural influences that they know will harm their daughters."

As a therapist, Pipher has seen a dramatic rise in the number of girls who are victims of anorexia. At exactly the time in their lives when girls' bodies are naturally becoming rounder, they are receiving a strong message from the media that beauty is defined as thinness. Bright girls are especially at risk of becoming anorexic. That perfectionistic tendency that we have all observed in our high-achieving girls makes them unable to stop dieting as they seek to look "perfect."

This book also presents alarming statistics about the number of girls who will be victims of sexual violence during their teenage years. "The incidence of rape is increasing because our culture's destructive messages about sexuality are increasing." Girls today face a serious danger of being sexually assaulted, which they have to deal with in addition to the classic adolescent issues of discovering their own sexuality and making sexual choices.

Girls are under more stress in the 1990s, but they have fewer ways to cope with that stress.

Pipher advises that "If they don't have positive ways [to calm themselves], such as exercise, reading, hobbies, or meditation, they will have negative ways, such as eating, drinking, drugs or self-mutilation." Girls need to learn to recognize the cultural forces that affect them and learn to take responsibility for their own lives.

Ironically, gifted girls are most at risk.

> They are likely to understand the implications of the media around them and be alarmed. They have the mental equipment to pick up our cultural ambivalence about women, and yet they don't have the cognitive, emotional, and social skills to handle this information.

Intellectually, gifted girls are mature, but emotionally, they are teenagers. "Though bright girls are perceptive enough to see through the empty values and shallow behavior of their peers, they have the social needs of adolescents."

Pipher even offers an explanation of why adolescent girls often have trouble with math, observing that "math requires exactly the qualities that many junior high girls lack—confidence, trust in one's own judgment, and the ability to tolerate frustration without becoming overwhelmed."

In example after example, Pipher demonstrates that it is not just problem children who become rebellious teenagers but rather that girls who are sweet, fun-loving, and obedient as eight-year-olds can be transformed into troubled adolescents who are engaged in a battle to save their sense of self. *Reviving Ophelia* is an important book for parents to read because its message will convince you that it *can* happen to your daughter and that there is something you can do about it.

Pipher believes that "certain kinds of homes help girls hold on to their true selves. These homes offer girls both protection and challenges...affection and structure. Girls hear the message 'I love you but I have expectations.'" Parents need to listen to their daughters and to try to discover the deeper struggles lurking underneath the surface behaviors. Pipher also suggests that parents educate themselves about their daughter's world by knowing her teachers and friends, reading her magazines, and listening to her music. Unfortunately, "American girls are expected to distance from parents just at the time when they most need their support."

Especially for parents of gifted girls, this book is an eye-opener. I learned something in every chapter about the pressures facing my daughter as she embarks on adolescence and the important job that I have as a caring parent who wants her to emerge from this turbulent time as a healthy adult with a strong sense of self. *Reviving Ophelia* presents a compelling argument for developing "a culture in which there is the structure and security of the fifties and the tolerance for diversity and autonomy of the 1990s." Mary Pipher's goal, echoing Margaret Mead's vision, is a worthy one: "Let's work toward a culture in which there is a place for every human gift." ■

MARILYN MORRISON is the parent of two gifted children. She is the *Communicator* Associate Editor for Parent Topics.

The Mortality of Life

Life
Am, spirit
Zinging, being, dashing
Goes too quickly, slowly
Mortal

Andrew Braver, age 10
Grade 5, Carpenter Avenue School
Valley Village
Ms. Alpert, teacher

Advocating for Your Gifted Child In Middle School

A wakeup call to parents

BY PATRICIA PASOE

After 15 years of teaching GATE core classes in middle school, I often struggle in my efforts to challenge gifted students to excellence, because the middle school philosophy and environment is so often focused on equity for all students. I realize there is no easy answer for developing programs for GATE students at the middle school. What

I do know is that if nothing is done to address the special needs of GATE students, we as a society are delinquent in developing our greatest natural resource. Contrary to the position I heard expressed by a middle school administrator a few years ago, we do need to worry about gifted children—they won't teach themselves!

A common approach to middle school gifted is to mainstream, expecting the teacher to meet the needs of all. As a parent, I watched a gifted daughter create her own course of study when equity offered little for her. She developed a unique skill of tending to two lessons at one time in the classroom—one that the class was focusing on, the other of her own interest—often following along in two books at the same time...one inside the other!

Grouping students in GATE core classes poses a different set

of problems. Typically, GATE students in elementary school are sprinkled in clusters of three to five in a classroom to provide all classes with a bit of "brightness" to spark the rest of the class. Arriving at middle school, these same students may be placed in a GATE core team for social science and language arts. They experience for the first time a class of 30 or more peers who have as many quick and creative ideas as their own, suddenly making them feel incapable. I witnessed this typical pattern among seventh grade students who had excelled in elementary school and then "hit the wall" when they were placed in a GATE humanities core class in middle school. They had met their equals academically and socially and could no longer do well just by showing up.

Some schools think that a homogeneous arrangement of gifted does not fit the middle school philosophy of equity for all, but I have yet to see a GATE core class arrive in my classroom acting or performing in a homogeneous way. Their skill levels are as varied as their interests. What middle school gifted and talented students *do* have in common is an intensified manifestation of typical adolescent behavior, including an increased craving for independence, a yearning for individuality counterbalanced by a need to fit in with the crowd, and an eagerness for attention offset by a desire to hide heightened emotions.

In thinking about equity and excellence, I know that I would not want to choose one to the exclusion of the other. Both are paramount in program design for middle school students, and the important thing for parents to know is "What programming is happening for my GATE student, and how is he/she responding?"

Before asking questions, though, parents should do a little research. Attend parent information meetings, read the district GATE plan and the school GATE plan. If those documents don't exist, ask to become involved on the GATE Parent Advisory Council, or help create one! Become as informed about the program as you can. I strongly urge you, though, to resist gathering information from the local gossip mill (and that information is always available). Keep in mind that secondhand information comes with baggage attached.

Having studied the information available, formulate questions to seek the missing pieces. Listen to the information to see that your student's needs are being addressed. You should hear terms such as "curriculum differentiation," meaning that one size does not fit all! Differentiation takes place by accelerating the pace, compacting the curriculum, offering in-depth study opportunities, offering tiered assignments (where all students explore the same topic, but the level of questioning or the expected product varies depending on student ability), providing flexible grouping to allow students to pursue areas of high interest (such as desktop publishing or social action research projects), and employing open-ended questioning requiring thought, research, analysis, and synthesis.

Whatever the program at your child's school, gifted students run the risk of being overused as tutors or being left to teach themselves. "Addressing all students' needs is an overwhelming task for a teacher with 30 or more diverse students," states William Gustin of the Center for Talented Youth at Johns Hopkins University. Watch for teachers who talk about differentiating the curriculum. If it looks like your child is receiving *more* work instead of a *different quality of* work, questions need to be asked. It is not enough simply to be placed in a GATE core class.

Parents need to be informed; so show up and be involved. Parents deserve to have answers; so ask probing questions. In middle school parents are typically reluctant to volunteer for fear of embarrassing their adolescent. Even if your child has asked you to stay out of the classroom, though, do not abandon your involvement. Just modify it. Parents and teachers are a team—become part of the scaffolding supporting your child. ■

PATRICIA PASCOE is a GATE teacher at Aliso Viejo Middle School, Capistrano Unified School District and has taught GATE humanities core classes for 15 years. She was chosen as CAG's Orange County Region 1996 Teacher of the Year.

FILL THE MISSING PIECES WITH EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Watch for special programs for gifted students, such as the following:

Odyssey Of The Mind and **Future Problem Solving** are mind stretching programs designed for creative thinkers and their parents.

The National History Day Program supports the social science curriculum while offering students research and presentational opportunities.

Toastmasters and the **Optimist Clubs** offer public speaking opportunities.

Programs like the **Johns Hopkins Talent Search** provide opportunities for accelerated learning in addition to putting you on mailing lists for other special programs for gifted students.

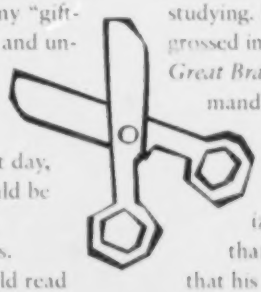
Many times, out of the ordinary arrangements for gifted learners such as those listed here are not offered to you because of the extra time and effort required by either the parent or the school. If you have an idea that seems possible, approach your school's GATE coordinator, or a creative teacher who seems to get things done, and ask for a brainstorming session. Chances are, your idea will generate new thinking and perhaps an additional opportunity for GATE students!

P. Pascoe

BACK TO BASICS

BY BEV MAST

As the strains of "Pomp and Circumstance" filled the stadium at Stanford University, I dabbed a tear from my eye and thought of the laughter my family had shared the previous night. We had gathered together that weekend for a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Our son, Lucas, was graduating from Stanford and pursuing a law degree in the fall. We reminisced about former school days, and Lucas reminded me of his first day of kindergarten. I had spent many hours teaching my "gifted child" how to read and understand basic math concepts. As I watched him journey into the classroom that day, I was sure that he would be the smartest and most verbal child in the class. "What other child could read on a third-grade level and add and subtract?" I asked myself.



The minutes of the first day seemed endless as I awaited Lucas' return from school. Instead of a bright smile and glowing reports, he met me at the front door with tears in his eyes, and a quiet voice said, "Why didn't you teach me to cut and paste like all of the other kids?" As a parent of a very intelligent child, I thought that snipping with scissors and gluing paper was not as important as reading a good book and adding columns of numbers. After the tears dried and we became friends again, we spent the next several hours cutting up old magazines and gluing pictures to every piece of paper in the house. As Lucas skipped off to school on the second day, I felt that I had succeeded as a parent of a "child," one who needed the basic tools to be a five-year-old in an educationally diverse classroom.

As Lucas grew, the kindergarten picture dimmed at times. In middle school, as he was preparing to take a test on Shakespeare, I was constantly asking preparation questions and making sure that he had the material down pat. The night before the test I wandered into his room expecting him to be studying. Instead I found him engrossed in a book called *The Great Brain*. As I started to reprimand him, the light of the over-prepared kindergarten student shone through. I realized that he was more than ready for the test and that his form of relaxation was to read a fun, uncomplicated book like *The Great Brain*.

The college diploma has a special place on our walls as Lucas starts law school. His kindergarten experience has not been forgotten, as Lucas inscribed on a recent Mother's Day card: "I guess I learned to cut and paste all right as I made it this far." As a parent of two gifted children, I caution you not to get so involved in the academic end of life that you forget that the basics of love, understanding, and simple everyday skills like cutting and pasting need to be there, too. Appreciate all parts of your child's life, and the rewards will be overwhelming. ■

Bev Mast teaches sixth grade in the Visalia Unified School District and is the parent of two gifted children.

Dark Thoughts

Tumbling out of my head,
    Falling with rage
The tremors of my life
And the ignorance of my age.
    Crashing into
A puddle of thoughts.
Piling up on each other,
    Jumbled, in knots.
    Oil slick rainbows,
    Rippling in places.
Pictures of the world,
    Millions of faces.
        This puddle,
Which has become a pond,
Images of dreams come true
        And beyond,
Float with the buoyancy
    Of a shallow sleep.
Oblivious of the thoughts
    That have sunk deep.
        Evil thoughts
    That boil and churn.
Thoughts that die young,
    Crash and burn.
Thoughts that emerge,
In the pitch black night.
When there is no safety in logic,
    No reason to fight.
The voices take over,
The dark chanted verse.
    My head is swallowed
By my shipwrecked curse

Dustin Reed
Grade 12, Ventura High
Ventura
Lorelei Gustafson, teacher

GIFTED At Risk STRIKES HOME

The following article is written by an educator with experience in gifted education and who is a parent of a gifted at-risk child. As will become obvious as the article is read, names of the author as well as the child are being withheld to protect the privacy of those involved. Despite its delicate and painful nature, the writer strongly hopes that sharing of this intimate family portrait may enable others to understand the gifted at risk and may provide insight into how to help this group of individuals. Lives are at stake as well as the potential loss of these gifts to society. The gifted at risk child can be your son or your daughter or your student.

The two-year-old boy gazed upward toward the sky. See the clouds, his mother pointed out in pre-elementary fashion. See the dragon with the long tail, the fire coming out of his mouth, was the child's response. I knew then that this was a special individual, someone who would see the world differently than others. Metaphor and simile were wrapped in youthful imagination. That creative mind today continues to be at risk. The retelling of some of the instances of giftedness—giftedness as seen by the parent and some of education's response may provide some enlightenment. It may not. But what is at risk is the preservation and the valuing of the creative sparkle. What is now also at risk is the person's life.

When our son saw Disney's *Pinocchio* at the age of three, he cried in terror when the puppet's nose grew. When he attended his first play at a small theater, he could not separate the reality in the audience with the fiction on the stage. His sensitivity was evident early on. The boy was identified as gifted when he was in the third grade. The principal at the school did prescreening based on teacher recommendation. The principal did not want him to be tested after the prescreening because the boy exhibited some behavior problems—his verbal responses were not respectful to the principal. There had also been other problems at the school that the principal felt the child had caused. The principal labeled the boy a troublemaker. My husband and I pondered the situation. One morning both of us awoke with the thought that it just didn't seem right that our son didn't even have the opportunity to take the test. We called the GATE coordinator at the district office and requested the testing; it was done, and the results were clear. The child indeed was identified as gifted. His art work and verbal skills were his strengths as were his insights.

In the fourth grade the teacher ran a very structured classroom experience with each child required to write the schedule down daily and keep to that schedule as they moved from activities at their individual desks. Our son had difficulty with this kind of teaching experience. We visited the teacher to find out what she required. We spent time with him on scheduling and moving from activity to activity with often only

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small amounts of time for each subject and task. After working carefully with our son, he mastered this technique with a painful struggle. We decided that although he had conquered this problem, perhaps what he was gaining might not be worth the struggle. We moved him to an open classroom setting. His gifted educational experiences were in a pull-out program, and in that arena he flourished and also formed his closest friendships.

One thing as an educator that I noticed was that our son processed and performed without the expected practice or study. He might not draw for months. Yet his next art work revealed some internal development that exhibited itself in greatly accelerated outcome. I remember once when he was in the fifth grade that he had a week to write a book report. I gently would ask how he was doing on it, and his reply would be that he was thinking about it. Right, I thought. At the end of the week on Saturday night when his cousin came over to play, all of a sudden our son said, "Oh, I have to go write my book report." Right, I thought. He only took a few minutes. So I asked to see what I expected to be a hastily and poorly written report. Instead I was shocked to read a brilliant report with insight and clarity that a non-gifted child might never write. I was learning my lesson about the gifted first hand.

Middle school was the beginning of the major problems. A cruel science instructor told the students they could easily all get A's in the class while he actually failed half to three quarters of the class with his double-talk. His reputation was well known, but no adult seemed able to correct the situation let alone any child. Not wanting to fail but not being able to work set our son, who was exhibiting paralyzed perfectionism and who was now in therapy, into serious talk about wanting to die. We called the psychologist as this suicidal ideation became serious. Our son's first hospitalization lasted six weeks.

After that the descent was rapid. In addition to difficulty with working in school on his subjects, the eighth grader started experimenting with alcohol and marijuana. He was hospitalized again in another program, this time by a psychiatrist. The doctor recommended a long-term residential placement. I began my research into what might be the best solution and visited five possibilities. One in Utah would be completely paid by my medical insurance. However, when I visited and found that the school had no experience nor programs for gifted but instead generally dealt with more remedial situations, that lock-up program was ruled out.

"The pressure he was putting on himself was mounting. The day he was to start college again, he was back in the hospital"

We settled on a school with a strong counseling component which used academics as a way to rebuild self-esteem. The arts were also evident is this rustic institution in the mountains of northern California. It was a struggle, but our son examined himself with trained individuals who cared and understood while helping to eliminate negative behaviors including substance abuse and other self-destruction. The two years were difficult for all but worth it. At the end of the second year, our son applied to four fine private prep schools and was accepted at two. His grades and tests scores continued to be high, and he seemed to be back on track. He decided to attend a midsized prep school where he boarded and did well academically. At the end of the junior year, which was his first there, he was elected student body president. He was accepted into a special summer art program at a prestigious east coast college. It was there, we found out much later, that LSD came into the picture. Subsequently, senior year ended in disaster for a variety of reasons and changes (a supportive, understanding dean of students was replaced by a more authoritarian individual). In retrospect, continued counseling should have been part of the equation while he was boarding, but we didn't realize. We wish we had.

Our son returned home, finished his senior year at the adult school, and started attending the local community college. He missed graduating with his new, close friends and all the requisite experiences. He still talks with regret about those painful high school years.

After some semesters at the community college, with various levels of success, he applied and was accepted to San Francisco State University and attended a summer session doing well with some support during academic

WARNING SIGNS

Alcohol and Other Drugs

Certain behavioral characteristics seem to accompany the use of alcohol and other drugs. Among the warning signs are:

- abrupt change in mood or attitude
- sudden and continuing decline in attendance or performance at work or in school
- sudden and continuing resistance to discipline at home or in school
- impaired relationships with family members or friends
- unusual temper flare-ups
- increased borrowing of money from parents or friends
- stealing from the home, at school, or in the workplace
- heightened secrecy about actions and possessions
- association with a new group of friends, especially with those who use drugs

-from *Helping Hand*, Performance Resource Press, Troy, MI

Post-Traumatic Stress

Particularly in cases of unexpected and violent death, the feeling of loss can "trigger" other unresolved losses or fears that we carry from past experiences. The depth of reaction can go beyond the current trauma, overwhelming adults and children.

Physical and emotional reactions to stress and trauma are to be expected. However, when the following symptoms are present for more than 4–6 weeks, medical or mental health resources should be consulted:

- change in sleep patterns (sleeping more or insomnia)
- nightmares
- change in eating habits (loss of appetite or eating more)
- stomach or intestinal distress
- crying all the time
- feelings of hopelessness
- extreme fatigue or irritability
- isolation
- loss of concentration or decrease in attention span
- loss of interest in favorite activities
- extreme separation anxiety

Developed and adopted by the Project REST Advisory Committee, funded by the California Department of Education.

crises when a paper was due or a test was eminent. He received A's in two academic courses which can be difficult to do in summer session. He moved into an apartment with a roommate, rediscovered drugs and was hospitalized in an emergency situation on Halloween. We rushed to transfer him to UCLA Psychiatric Hospital on doctor's advice for his third hospitalization. This was not the way we hoped our gifted son would attend that university. After another six-week stay he returned home, on medication and seeing the psychiatrist. He attended college, we thought. We discovered that after a while he only pretended to go but spent his time elsewhere. Then he left home dramatically. He was in touch and came home on special occasions like his father's birthday, his friend's sister's bat mitzvah. We tried to keep the connections and the communication open.

In the summer after his 21st birthday, he and I had a quietly special dinner and talked about the future. I told him registrations materials had come from the local college and he could continue. He told me his dreams were simple. We offered our support. A few days later he called and asked to come home. We welcomed him warmly, hopefully. He spent the next month talking about how he wanted to get his life back on track. He wanted to dress nicely, do well in school, have a girlfriend. The pressure he was putting on himself was mounting. The day he was to start college again, he was back in the hospital. Out after a week, he continues to be on medication and is under weekly doctor's care. He hopes to go back to school next semester. We hope he can just have a good day. We are seeing progress and are all working together as a strong family unit. Every now and then we see a glimmer of the creative mind. The art talent continues as does a newfound musical ability. The diagnosis is not clear. Did drugs cause the problem or did problems cause the drug taking or a combination of both? What role did the high intelligence, sensitivity, and talent play?

My husband and I are both professionals and devoted parents. We have and will do anything for our children with an emphasis on helping them to get the best education. Most of all, we want our children to be happy and healthy and to be able to lead independent and productive lives.

Who would have thought that this could happen to our child? It does. All we can do is acknowledge that, share our experiences, and hope that systems can work together to minimize the risk. We hope for the best. ■

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BY JUDY LIEB

TECHNOLOGY AND AT-RISK STUDENTS

When working with at-risk GATE students, technology can play an integral role to support the student, their teachers, and parents. There are many computer and instructional video programs which provide real-life problem-solving simulations and information. Students who may not engage with print materials often will engage when the print is enhanced with technology.

Evaluation of Programs

When looking for technology to support at-risk students, word of mouth and personal experience are two ways to evaluate a program. The software should engage learners, help them develop self-confidence and self-reliance, and help students to understand other points of view. There is a good source for assistance in the identification of quality instructional technology: the California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse. Its two divisions, the California Instructional Video Clearinghouse and the California Software Clearinghouse, have evaluated programs for the past 12 years. Evaluations of instructional video and computer software programs are conducted by trained educators.

Recommended programs support the California State Instructional Frameworks and have passed legal compliance for social content. Rated programs are included in the California Technology in the Curriculum (TIC) Evaluations Database. This database is now on the World Wide Web at: http:// tic.stan-co.k12.ca.us. In addition to the searchable database, this site also has information about the evaluation process and clearinghouse publications. Your local county office of education media center has information about previewing programs from the California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse.

Some Selected Programs for Gifted At-Risk Students

The following is a list of selected programs for students at risk. There are many others available.

The Decisions, Decisions series by Tom Snyder Productions is computer programs which have true-to-life simulations as well as interactivity. These programs include a comprehensive teachers' guide and student reference books. Several programs in this series are appropriate for GATE students at-risk.

- Decisions, Decisions: Substance Abuse is a program for grades 4-12. The simulations have students confront peer pressure, decisions about drugs, responsible versus irresponsible behavior, and relationships with authority. Students examine options, make decisions, and face the consequences. Available for MS-DOS, Macintosh, or Apple II.
- Decisions, Decisions: Violence in the Media is a program for grades 5-12. This program asks students to address and consider the impact of media violence in our society. It includes topics such as: responsible TV, responsible viewing, and free speech vs. censorship. Available for MS-DOS or Macintosh.
- Decisions, Decisions: Drinking & Driving is a program for grades 5-12. This program involves role-playing, critical thinking, and real-life decision making. Available for Windows or Macintosh.
- Decisions, Decisions: AIDS is a program for grades 6-12. In this program, student learn about and discuss AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, refusal skills, risky behaviors, abstinence, pregnancy, and birth control. Available for MS-DOS, Macintosh or Apple II.
- Decisions, Decisions: Lying, Cheating, Stealing is a program for grades 5-12. The program focuses on the importance of honesty, responsibility, respect, trustworthiness, and caring. Available for Windows and Macintosh.

Another series that may be useful for at-risk GATE students is

the Choices, Choices series, again from Tom Snyder Productions. This series is geared towards early elementary students. A comprehensive teacher's guide and lesson plans are included.

- Choices, Choices - Kids and the Environment is a program for grades 2-6. Role playing is used to discuss waste disposal, safety issues, recycling, and social responsibility. Available for Macintosh.
- Choices, Choices - On the Playground is a program for grades K-4. Kids learn about peer pressure, choices, and personal responsibility. Available for MS-DOS, Macintosh or Apple II.
- Choices, Choices - Taking Responsibility is a program for grades K-4. Students talk about issues of honesty, make choices, and learn how to take responsibility for behavior in and out of school. Available for MS-DOS, Macintosh or Apple II.

In addition to the above computer software programs, there are several drug education programs on video from the U.S. Department of Education. These programs are available through your local instructional television agency. Call your local county office of education for the nearest agency. Your agency may also have other programs on drug abuse prevention. The following descriptions are of the U. S. Department of Education programs.

- Dare to be Different. Grades 9-12. This program focuses on a friendship that falters when two girls realize that they have different goals—one is interested in track, the other hangs out with drug users. The goal of the program is to emphasize the importance of self-esteem when dealing with drug-related pressure.
- Downfall: Sports and Drugs. Grades 7-12. This program features interviews with sports stars who explain how drugs can harm their performance on the playing fields and in their lives.
- Drug Avengers. Grades 1-6. This series depicts the travels of a group of youngsters back in time from the year 2050 to the 20th century to teach today's children about the dangers of drug use. Animated.
- Fast, Forward, Future. Grades 4-6. This program features three elementary students who discover a magical machine which can project into the future. The machine can show what will happen to them years from now as a result of the decisions they make regarding drug use today.
- Hard Facts About Drugs. Grades 9-12. The program opens with high school freshmen filing into an auditorium for their class picture. The segments that follow show how alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, and crack use devastate the lives of the students.
- Looking Good. Grades 7-9. This two-part series is a hard-hitting look at drug use based on true-life incidents. Its purpose is to discourage student drug and alcohol use while encouraging peer support among students for being drug-free.
- My Best. Grades 7-10. This series is meant as a complement to alcohol and other drug education curricula already in existence. Decision-making and refusal skills are reinforced throughout the series.
- Private Victories. Grades 7-9. In this four-part series each young person portrayed discovers that drug abuse has a devastating effect on the lives of users and on those closest to them.
- Straight up. Grades 4-6. This series examines how a boy copes with peer pressure to use alcohol and drugs. It features Lou Gossett.

In addition to the above resources, parents can select software for the home that encourages thinking and discourages bias, gratuitous glitz, and violence. Computer games such as Myst and Jewel of the Oracle are non-violent alternatives to some games on the market. These two games require critical thinking skills to solve increasingly difficult puzzles and engage children (and adults) with story and purpose.

Another resource for teachers and parents of at-risk students, although a commercial one, is the Bureau For At-Risk Youth. Their online address is http://www.at-risk.com. Online resources include sections on the At-Risk Community contests, resources, and a buyer's guide. They also have a catalog of technology resources for at-risk students.

This brief look at some technology to support at-risk students reflects only a small portion of the resources available. Parents and teachers of at-risk students do have technology available to assist their children and students. It is a matter of being aware of these resources and using them. ■

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Examining Claims About Gifted Children and Suicide

BY TRACY CROSS

Welcome to the GCT column focusing on the social and emotional needs of gifted children. This issue's column deals with a very sobering topic; one too often appearing in the newspapers; one that elicits strong opinions; one that strikes fear in the hearts of parents—the suicides of gifted adolescents. In this column, I will provide an overview of what can and cannot be said on the topic based on actual research conducted. I will focus my comments on gifted adolescents. Even though preadolescents have died at their own hand, I will limit my comments to adolescents since they constitute by far the greater percentage of suicides (as compared to preteens) and since there is more information available on this age group. Please note the term information rather than data. This distinction foreshadows the paucity of research on the topic that will be discussed in the column.

One characteristic of our culture is the growing rate of its population that commits suicide. Increases over the past decade are seen in virtually every age group with the 15–24 age range showing significant increases. Suicide ranks as the second leading cause of death among young people (Capuzzi and Golden, 1988). One should note that adults older than 70 years show large increases in their suicide rate over the past 20 years. Within the large group of school age children are subgroups which have a much higher rate of suicide than the rate for the entire group. For example, troubled adolescents have been estimated to attempt suicide at a rate of 33 percent (Tomlinson-Keasey & Keasey, 1988). From these studies we can conclude that the rate of adolescent suicide has risen over the past decade as have the rates of other groups. We can also conclude that subgroups vary in their rate of suicide.

A significant contribution of previous research on adolescent suicide has been the determination that there are significant risk factors. The following is a list of significant risk factors associated with adolescent suicide:

- psychiatric disorders such as depression and anxiety;
- drug and alcohol abuse;
- genetic factors;
- family loss or disruption;
- friend or family member of suicide victim;
- homosexuality;
- rapid socio-cultural change;
- media emphasis on suicide;
- impulsiveness and aggressiveness; and
- ready access to lethal methods (Davidson & Linnoila, 1991).

One question I am often asked is whether the suicide rates of gifted adolescents differ significantly from the larger population of adolescents. In my own research, colleagues and I have conducted psychological autopsies of three gifted adolescents who committed suicide. In our literature review we found several interesting patterns. Pattern one was the tendency for authors to make conclusions and recommendations about the incidence and nature of gifted suicide without supporting data. Moreover, general findings from marginally related studies were used to support the contention that the rate of suicide among gifted adolescents is the same as or lower than the larger population of adolescents. Again, these statements were based on no direct evidence.

Pattern two was the tendency of authors to cite each others' work based upon speculation. The net effect was the reification of that speculation. This pattern exists throughout research bodies and is not unique to this lore. What makes this research body different is that there is virtually no true research at the foundation of the base, yet truisms abound. A third and more subtle pattern in the lore was the tendency for authors to advocate for gifted children amidst their manuscripts. Some of the pieces seemed less like efforts at research and more like efforts to protect the image of gifted children.

Gifted Suicide Rates

Let me reiterate what was most often suggested in the literature, that is that the suicide rate for gifted adolescents is the same as or lower than the general population of adolescents. The basis for this claim is conceptual, not empirical. In fact, there is so little evidence available about gifted adolescents and this topic specifically that nothing should be concluded at this point. In other words, we cannot know.

Although seemingly an innocuous difference in assessments, the ramifications can vary significantly. For example, there is a growing number of academics considering the population of gifted adolescents in smaller more representative subgroups than in an omnibus fashion. In this case, students with differing characteristics might have markedly different incidents of suicide during adolescence. Some evidence for this claim can be found in research

that has studied the lives of a large group of eminent people in the artistic and literary world. Among this subgroup, a higher incidence of suicide by the age of 30 was found (Ludwig, 1995). He also found that "investigative types" (e.g., scientists) committed suicide at a higher rate than the general population after the age of 60 (Ludwig, 1995). I must interject a serious caution here. These data were drawn from a much older population, and given the nature of the risk factors often associated with suicide, there may be a limited ability to generalize the findings. So even though it stands to reason that subgroups of adolescents are at greater risk of committing suicide than other groups, there is not enough evidence to conclude whether gifted adolescents per se have a higher than average risk.

Some Reasons There Are Few Studies to Draw On

There are several reasons why there have been few studies conducted on the suicides of gifted students. A few include:

- The current data collected nationally about adolescent suicide do not include whether the child was gifted;
- The varying definitions of gifted and talented used across the United States make it difficult to know whether a child who committed suicide was gifted;
- Issues of confidentiality limit access to data;
- Conducting psychological autopsies of suicide victims is an expensive endeavor in terms of time and money;
- Since more adolescent aged students than preadolescents commit suicide combined with the fact that secondary schools are not as actively engaged in identifying gifted students makes conducting research on this topic more difficult; and
- The fact that the terminal nature of suicide requires certain types of information to be garnered after the event.

Promising Studies

I am aware of a handful of studies that show promise of contributing to the research lore in significant ways. Two are looking specifically at suicide ideation, one at the secondary level and one among honors students in college. A third study showing promise is the psychological autopsies previously noted. Combined, they will add significantly to the current level of understanding.

One interesting question that recognizes human variation within the gifted population deals with a topic of considerable debate among academics. That is, "What specific role, if any, do the qualities that some gifted adolescents possess play in their suicides?" For example, possible connections between gifted children's unusual sensitivities and perfectionism (Delisle, 1986) and isolationism and introversion (Kaiser & Berndt, 1985) with suicidal behavior have been raised. In the psychological autopsies being conducted, we have found that Piechowski's treatment of Drabrowski's theories have been helpful in interpreting the data collected. Some of the characteristics we have found beneficial in the data analysis phase include: intellectual-introspection, avid reading, curiosity, imaginational-fantasy, animistic and magical thinking, mixing truth and fiction, illusions, emotional, strong affective memory, concern with death, depressive and suicidal moods, sensitivity in relationships, and feelings of inadequacy and inferiority (Piechowski, 1979).

What can we say about the suicides of gifted adolescents?

- Adolescents are committing suicide;
- Gifted adolescents are committing suicide;
- The rate of suicide has increased over the past decade for the general population of adolescents within the context of an overall increase across all age groups;
- It is reasonable to conclude that the incidence of suicide of gifted adolescents has increased over the past decade, keeping in mind that there are no definitive data on the subject; and
- Given the limited data available, we cannot ascertain whether the incidence of suicide among gifted adolescents is different than in the general population of adolescents.

More studies must be conducted before answers to these questions can be provided. ■

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BY LINDA BRUG

Am I LEADING you on?

BY JANE TAYLOR WILSON

OK. So you've been identified as a GIFTED student. I bet you're wondering what in the heck that actually means. You may have heard that being gifted has something to do with your academic intelligence. You're right. You may notice that you can understand ideas quickly and can do certain things in the classroom at a faster pace.

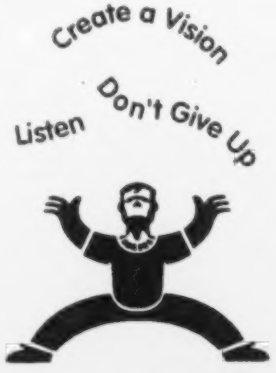
But being gifted isn't just about academics. Gifted students are able to push their minds to think creatively about things. Sometimes that allows you to solve a problem in an unusual way, to create something artistic to represent an idea, or to make out-of-the-ordinary connections in your mind.

There's more. Sometimes being gifted means that you are able to be a leader. "What?" you say. "Me? I'm not a leader. I even get nervous talking in front of a group."

Almost everyone gets nervous talking in front of a group. Being a gifted leader is much more involved that just talking in the front of the room. If the idea of you—yes, YOU—being a gifted leader sounds intriguing, then read on.

The first step to gifted leadership may seem a bit odd. LISTEN. That's right. Listen to your peers. An old Chinese proverb wisely suggests, "The one who listens is the one who understands." Listen deeply and thoughtfully to concerns, suggestions, and ideas. Then take time to think carefully about what you have heard. Use your creative mind (that is able to make unusual connections) to think of ways to make your classmates' ideas become reality. You do this because great leaders help others to accomplish their goals.

If you do some hard, creative thinking, then you will find you're



well on your way to the second step of being a gifted leader. CREATE A VISION. "What does that mean?" you may be wondering. Think of it as a puzzle. You need to collect all the pieces (by listening to a variety of classmates) and then seek to creatively put the pieces back together to make sense of the idea. As the puzzle begins to fit together, try writing down or telling a friend how you think you could help accomplish something in your class, school, or community. The vision is beginning. Ask your friends, peers, parents, and teachers to give you feedback on your idea. Although you'll need support for your idea, don't give up if someone thinks your idea is crazy. Remember, some of our greatest leaders were people who were willing to dream ideas no one else had thought of and to do what no one else had done—even if many people thought initially that the leader was crazy.

You're rolling right on to the third step to being a gifted leader. DON'T GIVE UP. If you listened carefully to others, thought deeply and creatively about their ideas and suggestions, and then created a vision to help others reach a worthy goal, now don't give up. Keep working. Try different approaches if your first effort doesn't work. Seek help from others. Try again. Be persistent. Winston Churchill said it well when he delivered an entire speech in six words, "Never, never, never—never give up."

The question emerges, "Am I leading you on? Doesn't it take more than just listening, creating a vision, and not giving up to be a gifted leader?" Yes, it does take more. Much more. But you will find that as you listen, create a vision, and don't give up, each year more and more of your peers will look to you to be their leader. These three simple but challenging steps will definitely set you on the path to gifted leading. Enjoy your journey!

JANE TAYLOR WILSON, Ph.D., teaches in a GATE program for Hope School District (Santa Barbara), in a credential program for Westmont College, and in a master's program for Azusa Pacific University. Jane also speaks at leadership training conferences for junior and senior high school student leaders. (805) 682-7767

Plane Thinking

John and three other friends joined the local Model Airplane Club. When they attended their first meeting, each brought a model airplane made from a different material. From the clues below, determine the first and last name of each child and what each airplane was made from. Use the chart to keep track of the facts. Put an X in a square that can't be true and an O in a square that is definitely yes. For example, clue 5 says Pam is not the James child. Find the column where Pam and James meet. Since that information doesn't match, put an X in that box.

1. Pam, who is not the Lane child, did not bring the styrofoam airplane.
2. The James child's airplane was made of balsa wood.
3. Seth Cool admired John's plastic airplane.
4. The Beam child made a paper airplane.
5. Pam is not the James child.

Answers on page 20.

	Beam	Cool	Lane	James	Styro	Balsa	Plastic	Paper
John								
Pam								
Jennifer								
Seth								

TALKING ABOUT BOOKS

BY JODY FICKES SHAPIRO & LINDA BRUG

JODY FICKES SHAPIRO is the owner of Adventures for Kids, a children's bookstore in Ventura.

LINDA BRUG is the Communicator associate editor for children's topics. She teaches English/Social Studies at Ventura High School.

Dear Diary,

Today was such a busy day that I can hardly keep my eyes open to write even one sentence. But then I think of all the important and wonderful diaries I have read about kids with real hardships, like *The Diary of Anne Frank* and *Zlata's Diary*, and I am inspired to at least write a few sentences. Someday when I pick up this book again, I will be so glad that I made myself write at least these lines before I turn out the light and crash. Good night...

ZZZZzzzzzzz

Dear Diary,

I wonder if other kids are writing in diaries. Miss Little Perfect Child (otherwise known as Mindy the Monster, my little sister) writes in a diary just to copy me. Hers has a lock on it, but who would want to read it anyway? The first time I thought about writing in a diary was when I read *Henry Reed's Journey* by Keith Robertson. He kept a diary of a trip he took from San Francisco to New Jersey. So I decided to keep a record of a trip we took from California to Pennsylvania. I used one of my dad's old calendars that looks like a book but he never used it except for a few days in January. He said he started every year with great intentions, but he resorted to a pocket calendar book that he could keep in his pocket. He said I could have the book calendar for my trip journal. It was great because there were little pockets in it where I put postcards, ticket stubs, and other stuff. I still like looking at that calendar/diary a lot. It makes me keep writing. Now I am thinking I could make some microwave popcorn so I will stop.

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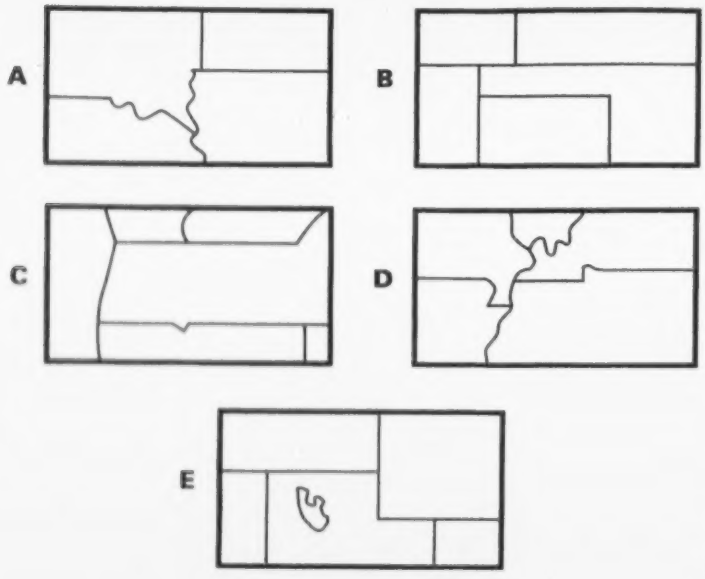
SEE THE STATES

Some parts of the United States fit together in unique and interesting ways. From the shapes of the borders, lakes, and rivers, can you name the pieces of the states pictured here? *Answers on p 20.*



Advanced Placement Tests

One Student's Perspective

BY ARI BLOOM

As a student who went through the gifted program, I decided to take four Advanced Placement (AP) courses and three AP tests during my high school years. I did this because I felt that college prep classes were not challenging enough and all of my friends were taking these courses. Why shouldn't I?

Four years passed quickly and after being offered a substantial academic scholarship to Brandeis University, I decided to attend. As I thumbed through the catalog, I discovered that my score of 4 in AP history would only give me two semester credits (if I were to major in history), and that my passing scores of a 3 in English literature and a 3 in AP calculus were as worthless as a score of 1 or 2.

Dear Diary,

What a great thing. We started a book in school today called *Catherine Called Birdy*. Mrs. Brug told us the author, Karen Cushman, was very clever to write about the Middle Ages by having a girl called Birdy keep a diary of her life in a manor in England. Her father was trying to find her a husband so his land holdings could improve. She was about my age!!! Egad! What if my father decided to find a husband for me? Instead of a horse he'd have to ride a bike. We wouldn't get driver's licenses for four more years! I am glad I didn't live in 1290.

Dear Diary,

I just want to tell you that I brought home *Absolutely Normal Chaos* by Sharon Creech. Marnie loaned it to me since she just read it (it's only in hardback). Her aunt got it for her last Christmas, and Marnie said it was her favorite book (except we both love *Catherine Called Birdy*). We promised Mrs. Brug we would only read it together in class. The boys in the class think it's really interesting even though at first they thought it was a "girl's" book. Mrs. Brug just laughed when they said that. I am thinking I'll get my own copy and read it again anyway (or read ahead...don't tell anyone).

Dear Diary,

Just got back from the bookstore and guess what? I got <u>two</u> books...Mom was in a spending mood for a change. The bookseller said since I keep a diary that I would not only love *Catherine Called Birdy* but I should read *The Private Notebook of Katie Roberts, Age 11* by Amy Hest. Mrs. Brug is nagging about book reports so I can get ahead of her this time. Perfect Monster got this really cool book that looks like a notebook, *Amelia Writes Again* by Marissa Moss. Monster begged for it since she had *Amelia's Notebook* and she "just loved it sooo much." She sure gets her way more than I ever did. No more time to write...I have three good books to read.

This policy of not accepting anything below a 4 for credit is present at most private colleges.

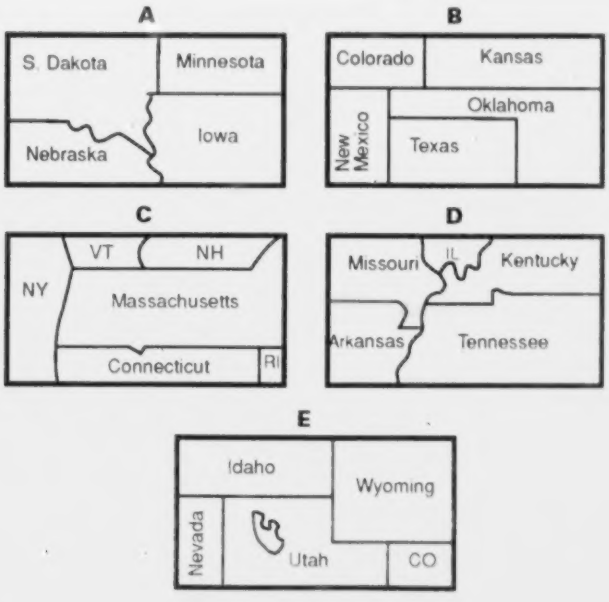
After taking three AP tests and passing them all, I find myself no better off than I would have been had I not taken the tests. Moreover, while my educational experiences in history, English, computer science, and calculus were excellent, the immense amounts of time and energy that I had to devote to preparing for my AP tests gave this economics major nothing more than a few numbers on a transcript.

On the other hand AP and honors courses did help me to become a better student by challenging me and improving my study skills. Thus these courses proved to be a highly valuable educational experience. AP classes and tests help gifted students by challenging them and helping them to improve their study skills, thus providing skills needed to survive in college. ■

ARI BLOOM, a GATE /honors graduate from Buena High School, Ventura, is a sophomore at Brandeis University.

	Beam	Cool	Lane	James	Styro	Balsa	Plastic	Paper
John	X	X	0	X	X	X	0	X
Pam	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	0
Jennifer	X	X	X	0	X	0	X	X
Seth	X	0	X	X	0	X	X	X

Pam Beam - paper
John Lane - plastic
Seth Cool - styro
Jennifer James - balsa



ADVANCED PLACEMENT POLICIES OF CALIFORNIA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES

While the locations, sizes, and specialties of the 106 California Community Colleges differ, a policy of accepting a passing score on college board advanced placement exams as college credit exists at almost every college. These "AP" policies are, for the most part, uniform from college to college and have been deemed necessary if a college wishes to attract gifted high school students.

A clearly stated policy in each college's catalog informs students with AP credit that the college will indeed accept it. Out of 106 community colleges, 86 have printed their AP policy in one of their recent catalogs. The policies are usually explained in a paragraph, and some colleges include a chart listing the tests they accept, the scores needed, and the amount of credit awarded.

Only Compton College and the four colleges in the Peralta Community College District will not accept AP tests. Jennifer Hughes, Assistant Dean of Students at Vista Community College, remarked that despite the Peralta's District policy, it is currently working on a uniform policy for accepting AP scores at all four colleges.

Of the 105 remaining colleges, almost all accept most AP tests and use the scores for placement and credit purposes. Contra Costa College, Diablo Valley College, and Napa Valley College accept only mathematics and/or English tests and use them mainly for placement purposes.

The best way for you to decipher a community college's unclear AP policy is to find the policy of the university that the school feeds into, as it will often reflect that college's policy. It is therefore wise for students at the California community colleges to research the policies of the U.C. and Cal State systems since both accept nearly every AP test and use them for credit and placement. These policies can be found in each university's catalog.

Additionally, it is extremely important that you recognize any differences between the policies of the community college and university to which you intend to transfer. You may get credit in one situation but not in another. For example, you might not be awarded credit for an AP history exam at their community college which only accepts math exams. Or you may receive credit for a score of 3 on an AP test at the community college but discover upon transferring that the university accepts only a 4 or 5 on the test. It is important to carefully plan your college path before you start your journey.

-Ari Bloom

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Sir Percivale and the Triumph of Virtue

As Percivale lay down by the river to think,
There came a great lion striding forward to drink.

When the great beast stopped and bowed down his royal head,
A great grim serpent attacked him, wishing him dead.

They fought most viciously, four hours without rest,
Then the dread serpent reared up, flared his doom'd crest.

The lion summoned his last strength and roared for aid.
Percivale smote the serpent's head with his gleaming blade.

Percivale swung 'round prepared to face the great beast,
Instead it nuzzled him. It's great pow'r controlled, leashed.

Then Percivale pondered what this miracle all meant.
And kept on thinking until his spirit was content.

The great lion stands as King Arthur of England,
Both are kings of their realms and creatures of legend.

Evil, Mordred, Satan, and serpent become one,
In a circle of hate in which all are undone.

The vicious feud between these two was by sins fed,
King Arthur must face his incest spawned son, Mordred.

Percivale's triumph in saving the lion's life.
Was the triumph of virtue. The ruin of strife.

I was inspired to write this poem because of a symbolic parable in the midst of the Arthurian Legend Cycle. As soon as I read this story and was given a chance to write an essay or poem, I seized the opportunity to shine, giving it a boat-load of thought.

Robby Moody, age 12
Grade 7, Saklan Valley School
Moraga

Psychological Autopsy Provides Insight Into Gifted Adolescent Suicide

BY TRACY CROSS

Welcome to the GCT column on the social and emotional needs of gifted children. In "Examining Claims about Gifted Children and Suicide," I mentioned a study being conducted on the suicides of three gifted adolescents. That study has been completed and will appear in a special issue of the *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education* soon after this column appears. This article will highlight the findings of the study entitled "Psychological Autopsies of Three Academically Talented Adolescents Who Committed Suicide." I hope that the information will assist in the identification of gifted students who are at risk for suicidal behavior so that a reasoned intervention can take place.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The three adolescent males in this study had attended a state-funded, residential high school for 280 academically talented 11th and 12th grade students in a state in the midwest.

RESEARCH METHODS

Psychological Autopsy

The psychological autopsy was designed to assess a variety of factors including behaviors, thoughts, feelings, and relationships of an individual who is deceased (Ebert, 1987). It was originally developed as a means of resolving equivocal deaths and has expanded to include the analysis of nonequivocal suicides, with the intention of reducing their likelihood in similar groups of people (Jones, 1977; Neill, Benehsohn, Farber & Resnick, 1974). It can be used as a posthumous evaluation of mental, social, and environmental influences on the suicide victim.

The psychological autopsy includes information from two areas: interviews with people who had significant relationships with the victim (e.g., parents, siblings, friends, teachers, romantic partners); and archival information related to the victim (e.g., school records, test information, medical records, personal letters, essays, diaries, suicide notes, art work). Investigators analyze the information to identify themes and issues that may be valuable in the prediction of suicide within similar groups of people.

RESULTS

The results have been organized into three categories: commonalties with adolescent suicide, commonalties among the three related to their giftedness, and themes which emerged across the three cases. The results have been excerpted with permission from the article "Psychological Autopsies of Three Academically Talented Adolescents Who Committed Suicide" by Cross, Cook, and Dixon (in press).

The following list includes factors found in each of the three cases that are also commonly reported in the literature on the suicides of adolescents generally.

Commonalties with Adolescent Suicide in the General Population

1. All subjects were adolescent Caucasian males.
2. They each manifest four emotional commonalties:
   - depression;
   - anger;
   - mood swings; and
   - confusion about the future.
3. They each manifest three behavioral commonalties:
   - poor impulse control;
   - substance use and abuse; and
   - extensive journaling.
4. They each manifest four relational commonalties:
   - romantic relationship difficulties;
   - self-esteem difficulties (either by exaggeration or self-condemnation;
   - conflictual family relationships; and
   - isolation from persons capable of disconfirming irrational logic.
5. The subjects shared warning signs in six categories:
   - behavior problems;
   - period of escalation of problems;
   - constriction (withdrawal, friends, dichotomous thinking, talk of suicide);
   - talking about suicide;
   - changes in school performance; and
   - family histories of psychological problems.

Commonalties Among the Three Cases Related to Their Giftedness

1. The subjects exhibited overexcitabilities.
   - Expressed in ways or levels beyond the norm even among their peers.

- Had minimal prosocial outlets.
- Experienced difficulty separating fact from fiction, especially overidentification with negative asocial or aggressive characters or themes in books and movies.
- Experienced intense emotions.
- Felt conflicted, pained, and confused.
- Devalued emotional experience, except for pain.

2. Expressed polarized, hierarchical, egocentric value systems.
3. Engaged in group discussions of suicide as a viable and honorable solution.
4. Expressed behavior consistent with Dabrowski's Level II or Level III of Positive Disintegration.
5. Attended residential school as a means of escape (family, hometown).

Themes Emerging Across the Three Cases

1. All three suffered from depression: Case 1 was diagnosed and hospitalized for depression; Case 2 as a classic marked depression (his journal clearly reflects the depressive thought of negative view of self, negative view of the future); and Case 3 was identified as in need of treatment by school personnel, and his journal reflects clinical depression
2. Suicide contagion seemed to have been operative: Case 3 seemed particularly to follow Case 2, while Case 1 set the stage of discussion of suicide, and the suicide of the musical group Nirvana's lead singer, Kurt Cobain, was related.
3. Suicide has a cultural component: the music (e.g., Nirvana, Jane's Addiction, Sex Pistols), the literature (e.g., Anne Rice, Lovecraft), and movies (e.g., *Heathers*) all played important parts for these adolescents. Even though many teenagers may consume similar media, there seemed to be an excessive focus on dark, negative content.
4. They had many characteristics identified as overexcitabilities (e.g., very sensitive, two were vegetarians, fantasy, mixing truth and fiction).
5. Suicide has a social component. The topic of suicide was openly discussed among the students in their peer groups; their discussions reduced the taboo associated with suicide and supported their position that suicide is a free choice that was their decision to make. As a result, there was no need to seek help or make referrals.
6. Excessive introspection and obsessive thinking was evident. The journals served as ways to avoid interaction with others, and as a result, irrational thinking fed itself rather than being disconfirmed by others.
7. The issue of control over others was present in two cases. This control resulted in attempts to harm in one case.

The following is a list of questions that remain largely unanswered at the end of the study.

1. How large a role does suicide contagion play in multiple suicides?
2. What role does unsupervised journaling play in suicide?
3. What is the extent of influence that overexcitabilities play in suicide ideation and behavior?
4. Does exploring dark issues by this age group make them vulnerable to suicide?
5. What is the effect of residential schools aggregating students with similar high risk factors (e.g., previous suicide ideation or attempts) in a setting which encourages self-exploration on suicide behavior?
6. What role does the combination of asynchronous development and dark literature play in suicide ideation?
7. What role does the lack of religious beliefs have on suicide behavior?
8. What is the influence of popular cultural icons who commit suicide on suicide behavior of gifted adolescents?
9. What effect does believing that suicide is an honorable option have on suicide behavior?
10. What is the role that popular media, where violence including suicide and homicide are pervasive, have on suicide behavior?

I offer these suggestions for you to consider as you think about the social and emotional needs of gifted children. We caution you to remember that the results were based on only three cases and therefore may not be representative of the larger phenomenon. ■

TRACY CROSS, Ph.D. is a professor at Ball State University, Muncie, IN. His field of study is gifted education with a specialty in at-risk gifted education.

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CURRICULUM

BY ANGEL BARRETT

THE GIFTED STUDENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

Building a Foundation

Every Child a Reader, the report of the California Reading Task Force (California Department of Education, 1995), provides the foundation of the 'Back to Basics' trend trumpeted by the media. "The heart of a powerful reading program is the relationship between explicit, systematic skills instruction and literature, language, and comprehension. While skills alone are insufficient to develop good readers, no reader can become proficient without these foundational skills." (Recommendation 1, p. 3)

Before parents and educators of gifted students throw up their hands in despair, consider my plum tree. As a new homeowner, I walked into the gardening center and searched through the sticks and barren twigs for the plum tree with the lushest, fullest amount of greenery to grace my yard. As I proudly sat my prize on the counter and reached for my checkbook, the salesman took out a pair of clippers and snipped all the beautiful leaves off. Furious, I demanded to know why he had massacred my tree. Because, he patiently explained, the foliage may have been beautiful, but the tree did not have substantial enough roots and trunk to support such lush greenery. Eventually, the leaves would have withered and died.

As with my tree, education is a growth process. Sometimes expectations are so high for gifted students that people assume that gifted students don't need to be bothered with anything as ordinary as the basics. Quite the contrary, a strong foundation benefits all students.

"Phonics are important for every child as is traditional spelling," noted Terry Emmett, a consultant with the Elementary Education Office and Goals 2000 coordinator. "Many gifted students are able to function at a higher level and may or may not need as thorough a review of that area. The guiding question should be 'Are we teaching students and challenging them at the appropriate level?'"

Every Child a Reader supports flexible grouping strategies by recognizing that "A variety of whole class, small group, and individualized instruction is necessary to meet the diverse needs of students. Grouping by developmental level for some skills instruction is useful as long as the grouping remains flexible with students reassigned as their needs and the tasks change." (Recommendation 1, p. 4) For gifted students this recognition may mean that they are able to proceed at a level and pace that is appropriate to their learning needs. "Mildly, moderately, highly, and extraordinarily gifted children are as different from each other as mildly, moderately, severely, and profoundly retarded children are from each other, but the differences among levels of giftedness are rarely recognized," Dr. Linda Silverman pointed out. (Scapegoating the Gifted. The New National Sport," *Images*, Indiana Association for the Gifted, v. 6 W 91–92.)

Furthermore, AB3482, which provides $152 million (approximately $80 per child) to districts for K–3 reading materials, stresses clinical diagnostic teaching and responding to students' needs. This money may be used for purchasing complete readings sets for every student and is in addition to the $27 per K–8 student available for language arts adoption. Complete reading sets may include spelling and phonics books or they may be purchased separately. Up to 5% of the AB3482 funds may be used to purchase classroom and library books.

AB3482 also provides in-service funds of $7 per child in grades K–3 based on the October 1996 CBEDS count. Goals 2000 provides additional funds for staff development at the rate of $14 per child. For school districts that received one or both of these funds, this in-service training is a wonderful opportunity to focus on meeting the needs of all students including "research on how children learn to read; research on how proficient readers read; the structure of the English language; relationships between reading, writing, and spelling; planning and delivery of appropriate reading instruction based on assessment and evaluation; and independent pupil reading of high-quality books and the relationship

of that reading to improved reading performance." (AB3482, Compliance Agreement, p. 1, #3)

Every Child a Reader summarizes expectations: "Use a broad repertoire of teaching strategies to deliver a comprehensive and balanced reading program. Teach a program that includes skills development and literature, language, and comprehension." (Call to Action, p. 15) This approach is consistent with the California Thinking Curriculum and differentiated instruction.

ANGEL BARRETT is *Communicator* associate editor for curriculum. She is an advisor for the magnet schools of choice in the Office of Student Integration Services, Los Angeles Unified School District.

There is a Place

There is a place I have in mind,
a beach upon a shimmering bay,
where tides roll in and softly out,
and near its sapphire shores children are forever at play.
There is a place I have in mind,
a sloping mountain peak,
where snowflakes in the pine air leap,
and in the caves the animals sleep.
There is a place I have in mind,
a green and verdant glen,
where ferns and mists doth intertwine,
suggesting fairies of the pen.
There is a place I have in mind,
a room, not big nor small,
the bookcases are filled with books,
purple flowers dance on the walls.
A wooden desk, a swivel chair,
upon the chair there sits a girl,
her hair a mess of tangles curls,
a paper resting on the desk,
a well-sharpened pencil in hand,
she sits and writes mediocre poems,
and dreams of faraway lands.

Miriam Segura
Grade 7, Maimonides Academy
Los Angeles
Norma Chodos,teacher

AB2769 Block Grant Blocked by Governor's Veto

BY RON FONTAINE

To provide the flexibility recommended for local site control in current reform movements and still preserve the program integrity of GATE and EIA, AB2769 was the bill carefully shepherded through the California legislature to create a block grant of the state's various categorical programs.

CAG legislative advocates watched AB2769 become a true bipartisan effort under the dual authorship of democrat Deedee Alpert and republican Stephen Baldwin.

Legislative support was developed to maintain the regulations of GATE and EIA within the chapters of this legislation. Both the CAG Board and the CAASFEP (Categorical Directors) had indicated conceptual concurrence.

The bill passed both the Assembly and the Senate without opposition and was sent to the Governor for his signature. After many positive signals from the Governor's staff, Governor Pete Wilson shocked supporters by returning the bill to the legislature with a veto message which read in part:

> AB2769 is seriously flawed because it would establish per-pupil funding targets for the new block grants at considerably higher levels than current funding would support...Enormous pressure would be placed on the General Fund to meet the funding targets specified in the bill...Were it to arrive on my desk next year in an amended form to remove the funding targets, I would be interested in revisiting the issue.

Current regulations will stay in place through the 1995–96 and 1996–97 school years. ■

RON FONTAINE is the Chairperson of the CAG's Political Action Committee.

Ten Schools Program

BY ANGEL BARRETT

The Ten Schools Program was designed to meet the needs of students who are at risk of not fulfilling their potential. Some students may not exhibit the characteristics such as high achievement stereotypically associated with gifted students. Some students are in an environment not conducive to achievement. Remember the scene in *Stand and Deliver* where the student has to have two math books: one for home and one for school because he can't be seen with a math book in his hand. Identifying students as gifted and developing appropriate curriculum are vital parts of the Ten Schools Program.

The following curriculum articles give indepth descriptions of these educational programs for at-risk students including those who are gifted but harder to identify in low-achieving settings. The articles also include special focus on two out of the 10 schools as well as actual lessons used.

96th St. Elementary Primed for Success

Nestled at the corner of 96th St. and Success, it's no coincidence that 96th St. is achieving. As of October 1996 the school has 55 students or 6.3% of its current population identified gifted: 27 in the intellectual category, 26 in the creative ability category, and 2 students in both. Thirty of the identified gifted students are African-American, 25 are Hispanic.

What's their secret?

Leadership...Carol Epting has been principal at 96th St. for 10 years. Frances Haywood, Ten Schools Program Coordinator, describes Ms. Epting as "a true instructional leader who knows what she wants and empowers teachers to take the initiative. She has a very hands-on approach and leads quietly, very quietly. She is very much into curriculum and instruction and is always searching for things to benefit her staff."

Thomanica (left) and Charniece (right), third-grade students in Merilyn Bush's classroom, share the "Can You Stretch Your Mind?" center.

Ms. Epting's style is apparent as she notes,

> We focus on student achievement for all students. Teachers are motivated to develop programs that focus on GATE. We're fortunate to have a coordinator like Merilyn Bush who is so well organized and skilled in gifted education. She helps develop other teachers who take charge and focus on identifying students. The leadership comes from the teaching staff. Mrs. Bush has helped other teachers to buy into the program.

Instruction...Staff at 96th St. creates an environment where all students have access to a thinking curriculum.

Merilyn Bush also exhibits a strong commitment to differentiated instruction and creativity in her classroom. Whole language strategies are evident in centers and classroom instruction. For example, every day students are able to choose a center that interest them and spend 25 minutes problem solving, dramatizing, and critically thinking. In "Can You Stretch Your Mind?" there are three types of questions: associative thinking (How is an egg like a paragraph?), imagery (How would things change if you were ten feet tall?), and fluent ideas (What are all the things that you can do on a Saturday afternoon?). Mr. Lenon's fifth-grade classroom is studying *Sign of the Beaver*. Each group has an assignment which emphasizes critical thinking. One group is role playing by creating conversations between two characters. Another group is simulating that they are lost in the woods and answering questions like "What would you eat and how would you get your food?" and "What kind of shelter would you build and what materials would you use?" The third group is predicting the impact of the characters of key events.

Focus...Ms. Bush is justifiably proud of 96th St.'s gifted program. "Each year the staff chooses a particular aspect to develop. Now that we're doing well in Creativity, we're going to focus on the Primary Screening Project for the 1997-1998 school year."

Excerpts from responses to imagery questions in the "Can You Stretch Your Mind?" center

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF PIGS COULD FLY?

"I'd try and fly, [sic] too because if pigs can fly, people can too." - Kenesha

"Pigs would be all over the world because they like to fly. We'd have not fresh air because they [sic] pigs smell bad." - Delvon

"They'd crash on the wood of the house because they don't have good wings." - Jennifer

"Maybe the planes would do things that pigs couldn't do if they're flying like play in the mud." - Monesha

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU FOUND A DOLPHIN IN YOUR BATHTUB?

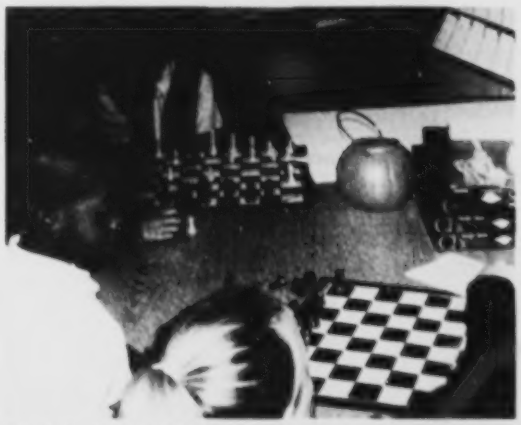
If there was a dolphin in my bathtub, my mom would come out screaming. At night he would come to my room. My family would not take a bath. My mom and dad would pay lots of money on the water bill because you would have to change the water every other day. We would have to get lots of fish to feed him. It would splash and we would have to work to clean up the water on the floor every day. He would splash in the tub and I would not get any sleep I would have to feed him and I would have to do everything by myself. Every day, I would have to go fishing to feed him. I would call the zoo to come and get him. They would put him back in the ocean with other dolphins. - Ronnie Lovos

If I found a dolphin in my bathtub, I would run out of my house and I would yell, "There's a dolphin in my bathtub." I would keep yelling until I couldn't anymore. If the dolphin jumps out and it is all dirty, it would get my floor all dirty. If I come home and see that the dolphin came out, I would go outside and yell, "Get this dolphin out of my bathtub!" When the polic take the dolphin out of my bathtub I would move into a new house. I would not go back to the old house. I would be afraid that another dolphin would come into the tub again. - Kenisha Alexander

Staff Development...Educators at 96th St. (including the principal) regularly attend conferences for gifted education. They have also used staff development days for the California Writing Project, HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills) Training, and workshops for identification and instruction of GATE students.

Commitment and Long-Term Planning...Carol Epting summarizes 96th St.'s direction, "I'd like to see more students identified not for the $70 per student that we receive but for the affect. Identification enhances both the student's and parents' self-esteem."

"We need to develop more curriculum to meet the unique needs in our community and the unique talents of our students. As we move more into other intelligences, we need to develop curriculum to target these areas and develop expertise in our staff. We may identify in certain areas, but we don't always have staff with expertise in these areas. We want to increase staff's ability to teach and refine the various intelligences."



Third grade students at 96th St. develop reading and reasoning through fun activities like chess.

"Overall, staff at 96th St. is committed to helping all students achieve and reach their potential." ■

112th St.'s Creativity Develops Gifted Programs

Visitors to 112th St. Elementary know why that school has been successful in identifying students as gifted especially in the creativity category.

Students in Sedonia MacCauley's first-grade classroom love to write so much that she had to create a second writing center t accommodate the young authors. Mrs. MacCauley makes certain that the centers have plenty of visuals to stimulate young minds. A successful whole language strategy is to let students draw a picture first and then let them write

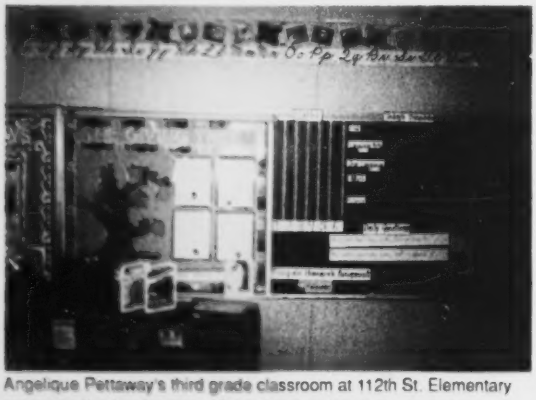
about what they drew. This technique works especially well with young children who may not have the writing fluency to express their thoughts as quickly as

First grader James Anthony loves to write. "My haunted house is scary to me."

they picture the idea. With markers, stamps, stencils, and Halloween decorations, students have a stimulating environment in which to work. At the end of the year, students celebrate their successes with a book faire featuring student-authored books.

Angelique Pettaway has been very successful in identifying third-grade students in the Creativity Pilot Project. Her classroom is bright and colorful. Bulletin boards help develop higher level thinking skills by featuring open-ended questions and examples of student work.

Mrs. Pettaway also has two or three "daily questions" which motivate the students to research the answers and help each other. Questions are taken from *Brain Quest: 1000 Questions and Answers to Challenge*



Angelique Pettaway's third grade classroom at 112th St. Elementary promotes the development of creative thinking skills across the curriculum

the Mind. The principal, Alphonse Edwards, also encourages students to write...write...write. Every month he gives the entire school a creative writing homework assignment. Although participation is voluntary, almost every student writes something. All writers are rewarded for their efforts and recognized at the "Student of the Month" assemblies. ■

GIFTED STUDENT AT RISK

Continued from 1

ligence is recognized, overlooked, or ignored.

Martine's story is not unique. There are far too many Martines in the schools. For many who have been involved with gifted education over the years, the idea that gifted youngsters could be at risk has been slow in coming and difficult to accept. A great deal was known about the characteristics of the gifted learner and how those characteristics manifested themselves at home and in school. Curriculum was planned with these characteristics in mind, and guidance and discipline models were developed making the best use of the then current knowledge. The gifted students could be described in great detail, and a plan could be made for the events that would certainly occur for them—success in school, a harmonious family life, entry into an appropriate college, and success in the future.

Classrooms today, however, are becoming havens for youngsters who do not fit the old profile; do not fall into any of the easily defined categories; and who, for whatever reasons, are not living up to their potential. Life is not as easy as it is hoped it would be for many gifted children. More and more gifted students are recognized as being at risk. Many more are in danger of not being identified if the old stereotype of giftedness prevails. Educators must look more carefully for these students and adapt classrooms for gifted children who may be at risk. Some of these children may include:

- The student who doesn't speak English.
- The child who is disruptive and spends many hours "on the yellow line" at recess.
- The student who asks inappropriate questions at inappropriate times.
- The youngster who often is not clean or is wearing shabby, outdated clothes.
- The child whose home is in disarray and whose parents can't or won't nurture the child's giftedness.
- The unusual thinker—the kid marching in his or her own parade.
- The learning-disabled student whose gifts may be well hidden.
- The student at the continuation high school.
- The youngster trapped by substance abuse.

Carolyn Callahan and Lori Bland (1993) of the University of Virginia cited the following comment in a brochure they wrote on at-risk gifted children and used it as a springboard into a discussion of such children.

"Because I could never talk about what happened to me, it dominated my life. Then, through my writing, I discovered that I have an intellect that is not stupid but unstretched...."
(Maggie Hoyal, 1983).

That unstretched intellect is a loss to both self and society. Parents, counselors, teachers, and other educators need to be aware of the many gifted children in our nation whose abilities and talents are hidden from our view by the circumstances of their lives. The unstretched intellect can result from inhibiting factors in the community, school, or family. Students who come from cultures other than the Anglo majority; students who are economically disadvantaged, homeless, or migrant; students who come from homes where substances are being abused or family violence is occurring are all at risk for not having the opportunity to discover and develop their intellects and talents.

Giftedness is different for each child—but we can find exceptional abilities in children in each of the groups mentioned above. These students all have unique needs based on environmental factors that might impede their intellectual, emotional, or social development. It is our responsibility to look below the surface for the characteristics that indicate exceptional ability in all children. (Callahan, C. & Bland, L. [1993]. *The Hidden Gifted: Who Are They? Where Are They? What Can You Do?* Brochure published by the California Association for the Gifted.)

Jacob's father is a substance abuser who leaves Jacob on his own a lot even though Jacob is only six years old. Jacob has developed many survival skills and does pretty well. His father is home most of the time but sleeps a lot and seldom makes meals. Jacob can operate the washing machine and takes pride in how his hair looks. Child Protective Services finds little reason to take Jacob away from his home, and he doesn't want to leave. After all, his father needs him.

Risky behaviors come in many different guises and varieties. The following list of at-risk behaviors offers a partial compendium of what is seen today within schools and society. Some of these behaviors are certainly more serious than others. However, it is difficult to fully measure the problems or pain associated with specific behaviors within specific homes. What is everyday for one person may be traumatic for another. What is cause for alarm for one individual may be of less significance to another. The list is randomly ordered; is not finite; and, as it is a list of behaviors, it does not include the political risk associated with the disappearance of appropriate programs throughout the country.

At-Risk Behaviors

Boredom
Class cutting
Dropping out
Substance abuse, including alcohol abuse
Running away
Eating disorders
Suicide
Parental and family conflict
Lack of friends
Cultural differences
Underachievement
Stress
Hypochondria
Depression
Abuse and neglect
Feelings of alienation and rejection
Loner syndrome
Lack of self-esteem
Sexual behaviors
Alcoholic parents
Economic disadvantage
Homelessness

Mental health professionals state that gifted youngsters often get deeply involved in their risky behavior before anyone is aware of it. In addition, many parents are in denial about such problems. Parents as well as other adults too often believe that it can't be true that a gifted and talented child could fall into such at-risk patterns. Unfortunately, it is only too true for many young people.

Adolescence, A Risky Passage

Bright youngsters must go through adolescent growth just as do all other children. Being capable and bright is little protection during that time when the world seems in a jumble and old, trusted skills don't always work. Adolescence begins about the age of 10 for gifted young people. It is easy to generalize about these youngsters along these lines: If they are smart, then they are gifted. If they are gifted, then they must be secure. If they are secure, then they are confident. If they are confident, then they are comfortable. If they are comfortable, then they are happy. If they are happy, then they are socially skilled. Unfortunately, such generalizations are not always true. The focus should be on youngsters as people first and then as gifted students.

Depression was a constant companion for 17-year-old Marcie. After a suicide attempt, she was in therapy, felt guilty about the attempt, but said she could see no other way out. She faithfully attended school and therapy sessions but said this was only to keep people off her back. What she really wanted to

do was just stay in bed. She was dropped from AP physics and believed the teacher was angry with her. Marcie perked up for a short period and seemed to feel good about things and was spending time with friends she hadn't seen in a while. Her parents and friends were hopeful that she was coming out of her depression. Her grades improved, but she did not seek readmittance to honors classes. Not too long after her "up" period began, Marcie died by mixing prescription drugs and alcohol.

Adolescence is a time to establish identity, to begin separating from parents and home. The youngster begins to define peer and opposite-sex relationships. This is not always accomplished with the smoothness that gifted students are accustomed to when confronted with a task, an assignment, or an interactive relationship. The familiar, established skills don't always work.

Janet, age 14, must go right home each day to see if her mom is drunk or sober for the evening. If her mom is out of it, Janet must think about getting dinner and little brother's homework started. She will have to develop a plan or excuse to keep her dad from being too mad. Maybe her mom can pretend to have the flu again. Janet seems preoccupied during class time.

Gifted adolescents find it difficult to ask for help when problem situations arise. Perhaps they are so accustomed to being problem solvers that they feel inhibited when faced with new challenges unrelated to academics. At times they seem to be saying, "Please hear what I'm not saying."

These youngsters need appropriate feedback from the adults in their lives, even if that feedback is negative. Adults living and working with children are so trained to be positive that they may sugarcoat the truth or overlook it entirely. For example the comment, "I noticed that your shoes were nicely shined as you kicked your little sister," will not communicate that it is inappropriate to kick one's sister.

Angelica is a 17-year-old pregnant girl and in a high state of anxiety. School personnel are beginning to suspect, and rumors are running all over campus. She had hoped to keep her pregnancy a secret. Her father will kill her when he finds out. She can't concentrate in her honors class and often feels unwell. She is behind in class and received a progress note in civics. She feels desperate and is considering running away. Her very religious parents have always said that she would be kicked out of the house if she ever came home pregnant.

Parenting

Every parent must do the job according to his or her own style. Some parents keep a long tether on their child, some use a much shorter lead. Both methods have

ORGANIZATIONS TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Center for Community Research
305 East 4th St.
New York, NY 10017
212-689-9385

Child Welfare League of America
67 Irving Place
New York, NY 10003
212-254-7410

Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, DC 20013
703-821-2086

Interstate Migrant Ed. Council
707 17th St., Ste. 2700
Denver, CO 80202-3427

National Coalition for the Homeless
1621 Connecticut Ave., NW, #400
Washington, DC 20009
202-265-2371

National Center for Research on Culturally Diverse and Second Language Learners
1118 22nd St., NW
Washington, DC 20037
202-429-9292

National Parents Resource Institute for Drug Education
501 Hurt Plaza, Ste. 210
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-577-4500

Parents Anonymous
2810 Artesia Blvd., Ste. F
Redondo Beach, CA 90278
213-371-3501

The Association for the Gifted
c/o Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Dr.
Reston, VA 22091
216-672-2477

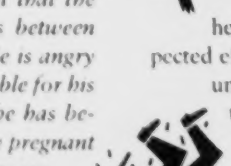
advantages and disadvantages. Parents should pay more attention to what their children do than to what they say. They would do well to remember that words may lie, but behavior doesn't. A parent should trust his or her own judgment and knowledge of the child. Who knows a child better than a parent?

Parents need to listen more often, listen better, and be willing to discuss even difficult topics such as sex and drug use. Give undivided attention when your child wants to talk. Listen calmly even when the topic creates in you a sense of anxiety or panic. Permit children their feelings, and accept them. Involve both parents in discussions if possible. When one parent tries to insulate the youngster from the other parent or hide troublesome behaviors, nobody wins. The child is denied the support of two people who care most for him or her.

Robin is the child of a disturbed mother. She frequently vents her anger on him for all that the world has done to her. She alternates between loving Robin and screaming at him. He is angry and feels trapped but also feels responsible for his mother's welfare. At the age of nine, he has become her caretaker. His mother became pregnant again, so they had to leave their rented room. The owner of the house said "no babies." Robin and his mom then moved in with someone from a church. The situation wasn't great, but they were allowed a microwave in the bedroom and friends watched Robin while his mother had her new baby.

Robin had been identified as gifted early in his school career. Soon after, his father left and life just seemed to fall apart. His dad's new wife thought Robin was weird—his thought processes and reactions to the world seemed unusual. He often pondered aloud the problems of life: poverty, illness, loneliness. A homeless street person would make him cry. He wanted to equalize the world. Limited visits to his father's shook Robin's world. He seldom completed projects and soon quit contributing to classroom discussions.

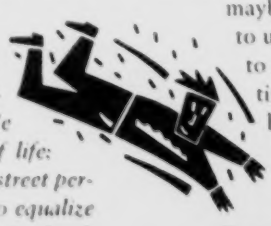
A special ed teacher started talking to him on the playground, knowing that Robin had gotten into trouble with the principal for using inappropriate language and telling younger children about adult sexual practices. The teacher asked that Robin be brought to the Student Study Team. He was identified as highly gifted, but was functioning more than two years below grade level. He was transferred to a special day class for emotionally troubled youngsters. He became eligible for county mental health services including counseling for him and his mother



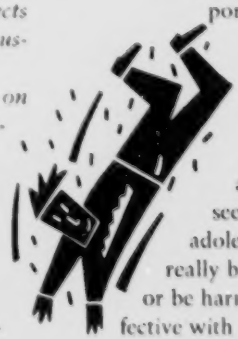
Weekly sessions really helped Robin. He learned that he had little control over his mother and her problems but that he could take care of himself. He is still unusual; he still has major family issues. He is often melancholy and very introverted. He continues to brood over the world's problems. The difference is that now he seems to have a sense of who he is. He doesn't have a lot of friends, but he does have much more confidence in himself. Robin says the special ed teacher saved his life.

Children's decision-making skills need to be developed deliberately and carefully. Parents raise kids to make decisions; and, when they make a poor one, parents need to be there to help out. When children make a decision parents don't like, one or both parents must be willing to take the time to help explore the possible effects and, if the expected effects don't seem too harmful, to allow the unpopular decision to stand. Adolescents often seem to have only two main problem areas in decision making: how to get something they don't have and how to get rid of something they don't want.

Parents who suspect their child is involved in risky behavior need to be alert to his or her behavior in the home, in the school setting, and in the child's community of friends and acquaintances. Parents can't assume that because their children are gifted they don't need guidance, advice, and maybe even some specific words and phrases to use in social situations. Being prepared to consult professionals in the school setting or the mental health setting would benefit most families. It would be useful to keep a card on hand with names and numbers of people or groups who can be called if or when a crisis occurs.



Drug abuse and alcohol abuse are equal opportunity diseases. It doesn't matter if a person is rich, poor, white, black, Latino, gifted, or average.



Education alone will not prevent substance abuse. Scaring youngsters as a part of substance-abuse education seldom works. It seems that all children in or close to adolescence feel bulletproof. They don't really believe that they can become addicted or be harmed in any way. "Just say no" is effective with younger children but seldom works

with children over eight or nine years old.

Adults need to become aware of the dangers that exist for young people on the street. Parents (and educators) cannot bury their heads in the sand and believe that the risks of the streets can't affect children who participate in the fine gifted programs at the best of schools. Denial must be replaced with heightened awareness, readiness to act, and vigilant involvement in a child's life at home and at school.

Parents must examine their own coping behaviors to determine if they are giving the wrong message to youngsters about the pressures in the world and how to deal with them. Children often adopt the coping skills of their parents; therefore, it may be useful for parents to evaluate their own behaviors. What are parental reactions to stress: Jogging? Talking to friends? Having that second or third highball? Withdrawing behind a closed bedroom door? Praying or meditating in spiritual pursuit? Be willing and ready to ask for help if your child ventures into risky behaviors. You wouldn't try to heal a broken leg yourself. You wouldn't plead with a child by saying, "If you loved your parents, you would give up your diabetes." When risky behavior becomes a part of your child's life, you need to seek help. Be honest with your child and communicate that you are so concerned about whatever is going on that you need to search out help for both of you.

"There is a range of risk facing many gifted students, from the danger of program disintegration to the risk of boredom in the classroom, from becoming a runaway to the risk of becoming a suicide."

Parents need to take care not to allow the well-developed verbal skills of their gifted child to cause them to overlook the reality of the situation. The times are difficult ones for young people, and they need to know parents are there to support them, to help them see their way clearly, and to value them as human beings.

Candace is virtually homeless. She and her mother and little brother depend on the kindness of a small number of friends to offer them a bed or patch of floor for a night or two at a time. For two weeks recently they camped at a recreation park. It is cold and unsafe there, but the authorities left them alone.

Candace is a chubby 12-year-old with long blond hair. She is often unclean, and securing and keeping clothes presentable are constant challenges. She is excitable and displays a great sense of humor. She wants to run for classroom office and can address the issues with clarity and wit. She will volunteer for any task. Her glasses are gone—lost or stolen—and she has difficulty seeing. Her mother is emotionally unable to hold a job and is barely surviving. Candace seems, to all observers, to ignore or downplay her difficult circumstances.

The GATE teacher got to know Candace and gave her some appropriate clothes. This was not easy because Candace was proud and resisted for a long time. Candace was referred to a local assistance league for vision screening and was given new glasses.

Junior high school was difficult for Candace. She retreated into a shell. High school was better, but her hopes for attending college were slim. She couldn't see a way out of her situation. Then she received a small scholarship and began community college. She lives with a friend, has a full-time job, and babysits when she can. She has trouble visiting her mother who has remarried. She wants to help her younger brother, but due to her own limited income and temporary living situations, she doesn't know how.

She last spoke about how hard it was to balance the desire to leave her past behind with the guilt such feelings caused her. She is determined to never give up on her education. She talks of rescuing her brother and making sure that any children she might have someday will be secure, warm, well fed, and educated.

Talents May Be Hidden by At-Risk Behaviors

Callahan and Bland (1993) identify the following as indicators of talent. Children whose talents may be hidden by their life circumstances may come to mind.

- Has an unusual sense of knowledge about his or her world?
- Solves daily problems in creative ways?
- Has found unique ways of adapting to the pressures of poverty, homelessness, abuse, or violence?
- Is "old" for his or her age?
- Tells his or her "story" or relates life events with language that is expressive and colorful?

Persists in tasks that challenge?
Finds humor in everyday-life situations?
Has an unusual vocabulary (in his or her first language or English)?
Is looked to for advice by peers?
Expresses ideas uniquely in writing, music, or dance?

It seems likely that one or more of these qualities in a child can be seen. But what if the child who exhibits indicators of giftedness is also involved in at-risk behaviors or living in a situation of risk? Callahan and Bland go on to suggest ways to approach such a problem.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU KNOW A GIFTED CHILD WHO IS AT RISK?

Learn all that you can about the unique characteristics which both indicate unusual potential and exhibit expression of talent.

Become an advocate for the child and ensure recognition and provision of appropriate services for the child by the system.

Be accepting, caring, and supportive, especially if the family or community provides an unsafe atmosphere.

Work with the child to help him or her to envision a future which is related to his or her abilities and efforts to succeed. Encourage the child to accomplish small gains and then larger ones.

Help the child set realistic, attainable goals.

Identify a mentor for the child so he or she can talk with the child about goals and dreams and help to develop ways to pursue them.

Communicate openly and in a positive way with the child.

Structure curriculum, counseling, and other support services to counter the inhibitors or obstacles to the child's success.

Jason has used his mom's credit card that he carries for emergencies to get money from an ATM machine. He has been buying drugs and other stuff that he needs like beer and condoms. He will be in deep trouble when the bill arrives at the house. He doesn't know how to get out of this mess. He considered running away but isn't really prepared to live on the streets or move in with a friend. He planned to sweet-talk his mother into forgetting about the bill, once it comes. She often covers for him with his dad.

For a while, Jason intercepted the mail. He made the minimum payment on the card, and no one was the wiser. He knew his parents would only look for the card if an emergency caused someone to use it. School work suffered as he worried about this problem. He tried to find work, but his parents refused permission. They wanted Jason to enjoy his adolescence.

One day, Jason's mother opened the bill. Jason tried to convince her that his card had been stolen. His parents were angry with him about the card being stolen but believed him. They refuted the bills to the company. Jason began what he calls his reformation.

He felt out of control and finally told his mother the truth about the credit card. She decided, uncharacteristically, to tell Dad. Jason's parents surprised him by not "losing it." They took away the card and insisted that he talk to a psychologist. They ended up going too, and the family is recovering. But Jason continues to wonder how this could happen to the bright, problem-solving, in-control person he always believed himself to be. He lacks some of the old confidence and courage he used to have. He doesn't really trust himself anymore. He feels unready to leave for college and has decided to go to community college before entering university.

There is a range of risks facing many gifted students, from the danger of program disintegration to the risk of boredom in the classroom, from becoming a runaway to the risk of becoming a suicide. All the points on the risk continuum must be noted and investigated when a child, as yet unidentified, is encountered who exhibits the indicators of giftedness or who has been identified but is having performance or behavior problems. Once such students have been recognized, programs must be adapted or developed to address the needs of these students in terms of both their giftedness and their at-risk behavior. Perhaps the at-risk gifted child needs parental and educational intervention and attention more than most children. It must be made possible for them to bring their gifts to the forefront and at the same time ameliorate whatever at-risk conditions are affecting their lives. ■

JUDY ROSEBERRY is the current CAG treasurer and a long-time member of CAG. She is principal of Stanley Elementary School in Garden Grove and was recently named Principal of the Year by the Association of California School Administrators. She presents nationwide on the topic of gifted at-risk children and is recognized as an expert in this area of gifted education.

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The author addresses issues of identification and current service and makes recommendations for change.

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This is a practical guide with topics on a wide range of social and emotional issues that affect student learning. It includes practical suggestions and specific examples.

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Referring to African-American gifted students as a "minority within a minority," Ford describes the barriers to successful recruitment and presents recommendations for successful retention.

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This is a very practical treatment of the topic with guides for all involved: teachers, students, parents. It includes surveys and organizational worksheets.

Hoge, R. & Renzulli, J. (1991). *Self-concept and the gifted child.* Storrs, CT: National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.
The researchers explore whether or not gifted students differ in self-concept from others, if labeling makes a difference, and whether specialized separate instruction impacts self-concept.

Kerr, B. (1994). *Smart girls too.* Columbus: Ohio Psychology Publishing.
This book explains why bright girls who show promise in childhood and adolescence often fail to reach their potential.

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This is a collection of writings dealing with specific minorities including Hispanic, African-American, and Native-American.

McIntosh, M. & Greenlaw, M. (1982). Fostering the postsecondary aspirations of gifted urban minority students. *Roeper Review* 9 (2), 104-107.
The author outlines the ways in which teachers, counselors, administrators, and parents can encourage gifted minority students to aspire to college degrees and professional careers.

Melear, L. (1991). *Educators guide to drug prevention.* Troy, MI: Melear Multi-Media, Inc.
This book provides an introduction to both basic and advanced concepts of drug prevention for practical and immediate application in a school setting.

Rimm, S. (1995). *Why bright kids get poor grades.* New York: Crown Publishers, Inc.
This is an updated version of Rimm's earlier work, *Underachievement Syndrome.* It includes descriptions of different types of underachievers, causes of underachievement, and a six-step program for reversing underachievement.

Schmitz, C., & Galbraith, J. (1985). *Managing the social and emotional needs of the gifted: A teacher's survival guide.* Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing.
This is a very readable and practical work. It recognizes the many demands on the teacher's time and provides strategies to overcome obstacles.

Silverman, L. (Ed.). (1993). *Counseling the gifted and talented.* Denver: Love Publishing Co.
This publication provides a comprehensive treatment of understanding giftedness, the counseling process, counseling in school, and special issues such as at risk, multicultural, and leadership.

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This guide addresses ten topics including discipline, stress management, communication of feelings, and family relationships.

Whitmore, J. (1980). *Giftedness, conflict, and underachievement.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.
The author makes a case for early identification of underachievers and understanding of the problem, and recommends strategies for intervention.

Whitmore, J., & Maker, C.J. (1985). *Intellectual giftedness in disabled persons.* Rockville, MD: Aspen.
The authors explore the impact of disability on giftedness and include cases studies of people in various areas of disability.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

If you are *not* already a CAG member, please use the application below to become a continuing supporter of gifted education. Because CAG is active in lobbying efforts to promote appropriate education for gifted and talented students, dues payments are not tax deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

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COMMUNICATOR

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

VOLUME 28, NO 2, SPRING 1997

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

35th ANNUAL CAG CONFERENCE

This is the special conference issue of the Communicator. Most of the articles are highlights of conference presentations. The issue is either an opportunity to read someone you've missed or someone whose words you want to savor and remember. Future issues of the *Communicator* will feature more conference presentation highlights as space and time permits. In addition to conference articles, Angel Barrett's series on the 10 schools with special programs for gifted-at-risk students continues. Reader involvement is encouraged through Letters to the Editor, the Young People's Pull-out, and Forum, a new feature. "Mining GATE Resources" is the conference and the *Communicator* theme.

All I Know About Parenting a Gifted Child I Learned From "Star Trek"[1]

BY CAROLYN M. CALLAHAN

While being a parent is a very complex and challenging job, there appear to be some general guidelines that just make good common sense. As we examined gifted children and their social and emotional development as part of our studies at the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, we found that there were also some basic guidelines that emerged from the literature and our research that could be used by parents and teachers of gifted children to make their lives more manageable and the lives of their children and students more fulfilled. At the time we were working on these projects, I was reading the book *All I Really Need to Know I Learned from Watching Star Trek* and found that many of the generalizations we were drawing paralleled the observations that Dave Marinaccio was making in his book. His maxims can

See STAR TREK, 40

Work, Interests, and Love

Developing Your Strengths and Talents

BY SALLY M. REIS

[Editor's Note: This article is an excerpted version of Dr. Reis' keynote address to the parents and students attending the Parent Conference and the Student Seminar in Sacramento. Although her remarks are aimed at the students, they are also meant to inspire and assist parents in discussions with their own gifted children.]

A few months ago, one of my daughters became angry with me because I could not attend a school function which was scheduled on an evening when I was giving a speech in another state. She looked at me and hollered, "Why don't you just quit your job?"

I looked at her in amazement and replied, "Quit my job? I don't consider what I do each day a job, Sara. I consider it my life's work,

See LOVE, 41

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LETTERS

At-Risk Gifted Students

It was wonderful to see such an extensive review of gifted students at risk in the latest issue of the CAG *Communicator*. The topic of adolescent suicide among the gifted has been of keen interest to me for many years; however, there is so little of value and substance that is available on this topic for parents. The article by Judith Roseberry, especially, will go a long way towards filling that void. I thank her for her timely and sensitive writing.

My thanks again for Judith's fine work, not only in this recent issue of the *Communicator*, but across the many years that she has worked on behalf of gifted children, their teachers, and their parents.

James R. Delisle, Ph.D.
Professor and Teacher
Kent State University, Kent, Ohio

The latest issue of the *Communicator* is wonderful, and the topic of at risk is right on target. Upon returning from vacation, I had several parent calls asking for help with at-risk gifted children. I was able to find articles, data, and literature in this issue that was of help to them. Great job!

Nancy Epstein
Glendale, CA

Thanks for the Grant

I am writing to tell you about what inspired me to write the grant letter and also to tell you what I did with the $500. I did not keep the money for myself, but I gave it to my school. As a result of my gift, they upgraded the computer lab for the whole school. I was going to study bombs, but instead I ended up learning more about HyperStudio than about chemistry.

I was inspired to write the grant because I did not like the computers in our computer lab. They did not have very much memory, a hard drive, or even a Windows system! After I got the grant money, the school board asked me what I wanted to do with it, so I said I would like to upgrade the computer lab. We bought six Pentiums, a color printer, and a Quick Cam for HyperStudio. They also bought HyperStudio for all the new computers and set up the Internet. This is great for our school because it is so little and we live in a small town in California.

What I tried to do for my project was to make a bomb on HyperStudio with animation. I think I learned more about computers than I did about bombs because I didn't make real bombs. I think bombs are cool but extremely dangerous. So I am going to stick to computers and just draw them [bombs]. I can install programs and help other people with problems. I can use the Internet to get information from *Time* magazine for the News Bowl competition, but I mostly use it to find cheat codes for my games!

The $500 grant that I just told you about helped not only me but also my whole school. It really brought the school's technology up and made kids more interested in computers. It made me think about working for Microsoft when I get older. The biggest thing I learned was that you always have to keep upgrading computers so you always need money.

Thank you for giving me the grant that helped both my school and me.

Adam Hargis-Bullen
Grade 4, age 10
Millville Elementary School
Millville, CA

Adam was a 1996 recipient of a CAG Student Grant.

CALENDAR

APRIL 26, 1997
1998 Conference Committee.
The Anaheim Hilton & Towers

JUNE 6–8, 1997
CAG Board Meeting.
The Westin Hotel, Santa Clara

JUNE 21, 1997
SENG, Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted, Regional Conference, "Guiding the Gifted Child: Social and Emotional Needs," San Diego.
Co-sponsors include CAG and the Arizona Association for Gifted and Talented. Watch CAG publications for details, or call 330-672-3100.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS
February 27–March 1, 1998
36th Annual CAG Conference
Anaheim Hilton & Towers

JULY 7–18, 1997
The University of Connecticut Confratute '97 in Storrs, CN. "Developing 'Giftedness' In All of Our Students." To be placed on the mailing list to receive a brochure contact Confratute '97, University of Connecticut, 362 Fairfield Road, U-7, Storrs, CT 06269-2007. Or visit on the web at www.ucc.uconn.edu/~wwwgt

JULY 29–AUGUST 1, 1997
12th World Conference of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children, Seattle, Washington. For full details and registration materials, contact the World Council Headquarters at 800-344-3450.

AUGUST 14–15, 1997
Teacher Institute, Grades K–8.
San Juan USD, Sacramento County

FEBRUARY 27–MARCH 1, 1998
***36th Annual CAG Conference*,**
The Anaheim Hilton & Towers

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

MARGARET GOSFIELD

I can still remember my first CAG conference though it was more than 20 years ago. I had been asked to develop a class for gifted students at my school when the district decided to expand its long-established elementary program to the junior high school level. I was on my own, however, as I was given no district policies, no training manual, and no staff development support of any kind. It was exciting, but scary as well. How could I know if I was doing the best for my students?

I learned of the CAG conference and decided to attend. It was held that year in San Francisco, and I came up from Ventura all alone since there was no one else from my district attending. I had no clear picture of what to expect, but once I arrived, I knew that I was embarking on a grand adventure. I remember dashing from one session to another, not wanting to miss a thing, but being forced to make choices because there were so many options. And I remember my skin fairly tingling with excitement as I listened for the first time to national leaders such as Sandra Kaplan and Barbara Clark presenting ideas that opened my eyes and mind to the possibilities that might be available to me and my students.

The annual CAG conference has become the premiere event of the year for California's gifted education community. It has grown from its first conference held in Long Beach in 1963 when 75 people attended to Sacramento in 1997 with 2,000 conference goers. What makes the CAG conference so important? What does it offer you? I would like to suggest some possibilities.

1. Increased knowledge. The conference planners make a concerted effort to feature the most important thinkers in the field from California and across the nation. We want you to have access to the latest research and the most recent advances in thinking within the field. Our inclusion of researchers from the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented is one example of that effort.

2. Practical application. Educators and parents must both return to their tasks at the end of the conference and deal with the everyday experiences of teaching and parenting gifted children. Ideas gained from more than 100 workshop sessions make these tasks easier.

3. Collegiality. Teaching and parenting gifted children is often very lonely. The old myths and stereotypes about gifted children remain constant, especially the one that says, "Gifted kids can make it on their own." What a pleasure it is to mingle and exchange ideas with 2,000 people who all share the same interest in and concern about gifted children.

4. Recognition. The conference is also a time when we give recognition to those who have made special efforts in the cause of gifted education currently and over time. In recognizing the Teachers of the Year; student and teacher scholars; Awards of Recognition; and this year, the Ruth Martinson, Past President's award, we seek to encourage all our members to continue to carry out the important mission on behalf of gifted children.

5. Resources. In addition to the ideas and handouts you receive at various presentations and workshops, our exhibitors make available the latest and best materials in the market to aid you in teaching and parenting gifted children. On a larger scale, the entire conference serves as a resource since all funds raised at the conference are put back into continuing CAG services such as teacher-training activities, parent outreaches, legislative information, and support for measures benefiting gifted children, scholarships, publications, and regional activities.

I have attended every CAG conference since that first San Francisco experience and have never been disappointed. Through the years it has helped me become a better classroom teacher and a better program administrator by providing knowledge and skills I need to do the best job I can. I hope the same holds true for you. ■

FROM THE EDITOR

VICKI BORTOLUSSI

The first time I attended a CAG conference many years ago, was as a parent of a young gifted child. As an educator, I had been to many conferences before this one in Anaheim; but attending as a parent, in an area in which I was not at all expert—being a parent—and in a foreign field—gifted education—I was overwhelmed, excited, and stimulated by the experience. The conference was most impressive, well-organized, and up-to-date.

The next CAG conference I attended was in Santa Clara. Traveling in a car with teachers from my children's schools, including the head of the teachers' union, I gained a new perspective on what was happening in my children's classrooms. Also, at the conference, I remember a speaker sharing the findings of a longitudinal study on gifted, award-winning students; that, as adults, they returned to what made them truly happy, what they passionately cared about. The conclusion, therefore, was that as parents we should encourage and support what our children expressed passion for, for that would bring them happiness in their lives.

At yet another CAG conference, in Oakland, I remember sitting in a room filled with parents. The speaker asked how many people in the room were gifted. No hands were raised. Then the speaker asked how many in the room had gifted children. Of course, all hands were raised. The speaker asked "Where do you think their giftedness came from?" What a realization! What an important lens through which to view my gifted child's experiences! Perhaps I would learn more about myself in the process. If only I would have had the opportunity to have experienced gifted education.

Not only have CAG conferences given me memorable moments and invaluable insights, but they continue to impress me with their organization, expansiveness, and currency. We in California are most fortunate to have this yearly event available to us, and this happens because of the dedication and expertise of hardworking educators and parents who serve as CAG volunteer leaders.

The conference issue of the *Communicator* tries to record some of those memorable moments for future reference. Major presenters such as Carolyn M. Callahan and Sally Reis share insights about parenting perspectives. Preeminent educator A. Harry Passow is honored with a memorial tribute. Catherine Barkett, a regular conference presenter and state level expert, writes about standards to meet the needs of gifted. Technology is featured through CAG presenters Ian Jukes and Karen Krupnick.

Award winners honored at the conference are also highlighted in this conference issue. Regular features include our Young People's Pullout and continuing focus on education for gifted-at-risk in articles on the special Ten Schools Project.

The CAG conference is in itself a resource to be mined. So too we hope will be the conference issue of the *Communicator*. ■

An Invitation From SENG

Dear CAG Members and Affiliates:

On behalf of SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted) I want to invite you to a special one-day Western Regional SENG conference to be held on June 21, 1997 at the Hanalei Hotel in San Diego. The Conference theme is Guiding The Gifted Child: Social and Emotional Needs, and the speakers will be George Betts, Jim Delisle, Sharon Lind, Judy Roseberry, Jim Webb and Joanne Rand Whitmore. Topics will include: gifted adolescents; preventing underachievement; behavioral disorders and gifted children; supersensitivity and gifted individuals; and issues of adult giftedness.

The conference format will be unusual. In the morning each speaker will give a summary, followed by an in-depth presentation. In the afternoon the speakers will comprise a panel with Judy Roseberry as moderator. Audience questions will be directed to any or all of the expert panelists, and will provide opportunities for in-depth dialogue on key issues.

This Western Regional SENG Conference is co-sponsored by the California Association for the Gifted, the Arizona Association for Gifted and Talented, the Association of San Diego Educators of the Gifted, and the San Diego Gifted Association. The registration fee (which includes luncheon and materials) is $120 before June 1 and $150 after June 1. Hotel rates are $79 per room for up to four people. Also, on Friday night prior to the conference there will be an informal poolside reception.

We hope you will come, and that you will distribute this invitation to other educators, counselors, psychologists and parents. It is an excellent opportunity to hear national experts in the field of social and emotional needs of gifted. For registration information, please call (330) 672-3237 or fax (330) 672-2079 and ask about the SENG Western Regional Conference.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,
James T. Webb, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist
Co-Director, SENG
7776 E. Via De Belleza
Scottsdale, AZ 85258

The Growing Problem of Gifted Underachievers

BY TERRENCE W. BROWN

Parents who are concerned about their children's education are becoming increasingly aware that their kids are less motivated for academic achievement than their parents were when they were in school. These parents know the value of education. Some obtained college degrees and some did not, but they all want college educations for their kids. Experts have a variety of theories to explain this increasing lack of motivation, from de-

"Too much anxiety, or anxiety that can't be handled, interferes with thinking."

centralized families to divorce. However, for many of these unmotivated, lazy kids, there is no apparent reason for their lack of effort. Many of them score above average on intelligence tests; some have even been identified as gifted. They come from good families and have parents who care about them. They're polite and well mannered, basically good kids. Who are they, then? How did they get to be lazy and unmotivated? Most importantly, what can be done about it?

To answer these questions, parents should first understand the general characteristics of these children. How are they different from other failures in school? They haven't been identified because, unlike other children we read about in the papers or see on TV, they really don't have the kind of problems that compete for public attention. They have unremarkable medical histories and developmental records. They are basically healthy and have, in many cases, enjoyed some affluence. One characteristic common in these children is persistence—they don't stick to things until they're done. In some instances they complete tasks, but they've rushed through so quickly that they might just as well have not started at all. Another characteristic is the inability to manage time well. They put things off until the last minute—sometimes they get it done, sometimes they don't. Sometimes they bring home books to do the homework, but they're the wrong books. In some cases, the students have done the homework, but they didn't hand it in. The parents find the completed homework papers under the used sandwich wrappers in the child's bookbag at the end of the week. In addition, these students don't function well independently. They will do better temporarily if teachers or parents spend extra time with them, but when the supervision isn't there, the effort evaporates. These young people are called underachievers, and their numbers are growing. It has been said that about 30 percent of high school dropouts in the United States are gifted underachievers.

Where do these traits come from? How do these children come to be lazy and unmotivated? The development of the underachieving personality involves circumstances that lead to a sense of not measuring up, of not being as good as someone else. One teenager told me he recalled that when he was five years old, he and his 10-year-old brother had a contest to see who could do the most pushups. He remembers that his brother did 25 pushups and he did 3. He recalled other incidents after that when he began "contests" with the fear that he wasn't good enough. This made him reluctant to try very hard. He said he was anxious about not doing well. He anticipated that what had happened before would happen again and reasoned that if he didn't really try, then he wouldn't really fail. Early-life comparisons such as this one are common, and they're usually unfair because the youngster is measured against a higher standard. Parents feel it's good to set "challenging" standards, older kids take advantage of younger ones to prove that they're better, and in many cases the only people around that children can compare

See UNDERACHIEVERS, 44

MINDING YOUR OWN RESOURCE

A Team Approach to Raising a Gifted Child

BY BEV MAST

My daughter, Sarah, began her senior year in high school by completing college and scholarship applications. During this process, she wrote an essay that tore at my heartstrings as she reminisced about an old red photo album and her first day of kindergarten. She described the picture of a blond, blue-eyed child eager to start down the road of public education with a Barbie lunch pail and pigtails tied with bright red bows. As she stated, "At that stage of my life, my goals were simple: writing stories, dancing, and enjoying life."

I believe that my husband, Don, and I can honestly say after 12 years of supporting our daughter in her educational endeavors that she has written numerous stories, many of which have won prizes and a significant number of which have been published; danced a great deal, whether in recitals or at the prom; and foremost, enjoyed life. As parents of two gifted children, we have struggled with the fine line between exploiting their giftedness and creating a nurturing, supportive playing field with diverse experiences.

When Sarah began showing an aptitude for writing, my husband compiled a list of writing responsibilities that were kept by the computer. This checklist proved to be invaluable as she went from short, simple stories to longer, more in-depth research. During Sarah's formative years, I was fortunate to be her sixth-grade teacher and provide a springboard for her many creative abilities. When she was in middle school, we did not have access to such wonderful programs such as talent searches, summer writing institutes, and the Internet that are available today. As she began forming goals for her post-secondary education and career, we searched out community resources that would provide her with opportunities to observe professionals involved in newspaper writing and public relations. Since we had already been through the college application process with our son, we were fully aware of the breadth and variety of experiences and activities expected by colleges and universities. We knew that Sarah not only had to be strong academically, but also be well-rounded. The three of us discussed her interests and concerns so that the activities she was involved in and the volunteering she did were things about which she felt strongly.

As Sarah's senior year draws to an end and the college applications are done, she can proudly say she did it all. The ultimate accolade she received was at a city banquet in November where she was selected Visalia's Youth of the Year. With tears streaming down our proud cheeks, we can look back to that red photo album and see that she has enjoyed life and will continue to do so because as a team we created goals, expectations, and opportunities for our gifted child. ■

BEV, DON, and SARAH MAST presented a workshop at the CAG conference in Sacramento. They provided handouts on talent searches, writing programs, Internet addresses, organizational ideas, and much more.

3R's for GATE Parents

Rights, Responsibilites, and Resources

BY LEAH WELTE

As parents of gifted youngsters, we possess great potential power to influence children's education in a positive manner...gold ore waiting to be mined! However, this power is often weakened due to use of inappropriate strategies, or it remains unused because of lack of awareness. The purpose of this article is a reminder that parents are key people who have personal, educational, and societal rights with important accompanying responsibilities.

Right #1 is to appreciate the capabilities and potential demonstrated by precocious children.
Because gifted children and their parents are often misunderstood,
Responsibility #1 is to exercise discretion and tact when discussing children with others who may mistake enthusiasm for bragging, and to communicate clearly to children that they are valued for who they are, not what they can achieve.

Right #2 is to encourage our multitalented offspring to explore a number of outside interests.
Because gifted children often seek to take on too much,
Responsibility #2 is to regulate and monitor children's involvement to maintain a realistic balance between extracurricular activities and schoolwork.

Right #3 is to receive meaningful communication about children's gifted education from those responsible for providing it.

Because parents of gifted children are often extremely busy,
Responsibility #3 is to thoroughly review the written information that is sent home and to attend meetings, conferences, or presentations where gifted children, especially our own, are the focus.

Right #4 is to question or express concern, when necessary, about children's school experience until satisfactory answers are provided.
Because parents of gifted children often are forceful people,
Responsibility #4 is to listen carefully to the answers given and maintain reasonable, though persistent, expectations which take into consideration the conditions affecting the school and its personnel.

Right #5 is to expect that children will enhance areas of personal strength and improve areas of lesser strength as a result of their gifted education.
Because gifted children often are frustrated by that which is not learned quickly and are not always aware of the quality of work they can accomplish,
Responsibility #5 is to allow children to deal with a reasonable amount of frustration and challenge on their own before providing assistance and to consistently encourage personal best, not perfect work.

Right #6 is to anticipate that others who interact with children will treat them in a positive manner.
Because gifted children often have unusual behaviors, vocabulary, and thinking as well as a degree of intolerance for those less motivated to learn,
Responsibility #6 - is to counsel developing children to make choices in less significant situations which help them to be more accepted or valued by their chronological-age peer group.

Right #7 is to insist that an appropriately challenging and enriched curriculum is provided to children on a consistent basis across the subjects.
Because gifted children are often a small group within the class,
Responsibility #7 is to volunteer time in the classroom on a consistent basis to assist the teacher, or even to teach the gifted students a subject about which you have some expertise.

Right #8 is to expect that children will mature into reasonably well-adjusted, successful students who realize their potential.
Because gifted children are often in need of special guidance,
Responsibility #8 is to become knowledgeable about the development of giftedness, different gifted personality types, and guidance techniques for precocious youngsters.

Right #9 is to see that children are provided the opportunity to achieve notable success in their areas of special talent.
Because gifted children often have a wide variety of interests and capabilities beyond the scope of many regular classrooms,
Responsibility #9 is to become aware of and utilize resources which will support the development of children's unique abilities and enhance their school experience.

Right #10 is to demand that the same high-caliber resources available in special education programs (financial and teacher training) are afforded to students with special educational needs.
Because gifted children are often perceived by others as richly endowed and not in need of or deserving additional assistance,
Responsibility #10 is to become or remain actively involved in local, state, and national groups which support the cause of gifted education.

By acknowledging these rights and responsibilities as well as studying the many resources available (see sidebar), we can arm ourselves with the strength and commitment necessary to provide high-quality experiences for gifted children at home and in the educational setting. ■

LEAH WELTE is a GATE-SDC teacher and former GATE Administrator in the Saddleback Valley Unified School District in southern Orange County. She is also the parent of three gifted teenagers/young adults.

THE THIRD R: RESOURCES

There are numerous sources from which to learn about gifted children, their needs, and ways to help them. Some especially pragmatic books are listed below with brief explanations of their focus:

Guiding the Gifted Child by Webb, Meckstroth, and Tolan (1982), Ohio Psychology Publishing Company, is filled with practical information and suggestions to help understand children and counsel them in areas such as building positive peer-sibling relationships and effective two-way communication as well as motivation and stress reduction strategies.

Challenging Gifted Children by Welte (1996), Teacher Created Materials, provides a brief overview of subjects such as definitions of giftedness and intelligence testing, personality type and learning styles, underachievement in gifted children, desirable teacher qualities, goals for gifted children, and suggestions for parents and teachers to help them achieve those goals.

Please Understand Me by Kiersey & Bates (1978), Prometheus Nemesis Books, discusses the concept of personality type and its significance to perceptions of self, others, and the world at large, encouraging understanding and valuing one another's differences.

Smart Girls, Gifted Women by Kerr (1985), Ohio Psychology Publishing, pinpoints the unique challenges faced by gifted girls and outlines strategies for them to realize their potential in all areas.

Perfectionism by Adderholdt-Elliott (1987), Free Spirit, helps to find out if children try to be *too* good, the reasons why, and what can be done about it.

Freed's Guide to Student Competitions and Publishing. Department GT-400-M, 218 West Fountain Avenue, Delaware, Ohio, 43015, is a comprehensive source book containing the necessary information to enable children to gain recognition for their achievements in many areas of ability and interest.

L. Welte

A. Harry Passow

A Man of Preeminence, A Life of Productivity

It is with admiration, respect, and gratitude that the California Association for the Gifted presents a tribute to A. Harry Passow in the form of the Ruth A. Martinson Past Presidents' Award. Dr. Passow lived most of his life in New York, but his work influenced the nation and beyond. It would take several lifetimes for most people to accomplish all that he did in his 75 years. We offer here an outline of his time and activities as well as his own words reflecting on his professional career.

His accomplishments during his lifetime were prodigious.

- Taught thousands of students
- Sponsored more than 115 doctoral dissertations
- Wrote, co-authored or edited 31 books, monographs and pamphlets
- Published more than 225 journal articles and chapters in books
- Presented at countless numbers of conferences, workshops, institutes and meetings in the U.S. and abroad

IN HIS OWN WORDS

"As I approach mandatory retirement in June 1991, I would like to think that my research, teaching, writing, consulting and other activities have made a difference—for the better—in the education of children and youth. I am sometimes reminded by colleagues that I was "into" education of the gifted, involved in problems of urban education and the disadvantaged, and concerned about high school reform long before they were "fashionable." For the past 40 years I have been able to work with and count as colleagues the finest group of people one could ever hope for.

There have been many times during these past four decades that I have thought about the future of education and schooling--in fact, sometimes I think that I have done nothing but that. Having been around on the educational scene for a good many years, I find myself both observing and being involved in "cycles"--times of great concern and feverish activity which die down and then are revived. There have been "crises in education" and calls for school reform regularly over the years and, while the current efforts seem more vigorous and intense than in the past, one is not sure how radical or lasting the changes will be.

Since initiating the Talented Youth Project in 1954, I have seen three cycles of interest and activity in the area of gifted education. Concern with education of the disadvantaged, school desegregations and the survival of urban school systems waxes and wanes. I have watched, and sometimes encouraged the introduction of new technology but have never accepted the view that technology would revolutionize education and schooling. I have certainly seen significant changes in schooling but nothing that is as radical as the rhetoric of the day would suggest. Can the schools really deal with the tremendous changes that have taken place in society, which have so altered life for individuals, their families and societies of which they are a part? I have listened to the rhetoric of the reformers and the futurists and wondered whether the former had analyzed correctly the problems for which they proposed solutions and whether the futurists' predictions had a reality base.

In the end, I see the continuing need for developing caring, concerned, compassionate, committed individuals who will use their talent potential for society's benefit as well as their self-fulfillment. This is what education and schooling have always been about and as long as we keep that in mind, there is hope for the future of education and schooling. How radically different the processes of education and schooling will be is hard for me to imagine. I confess I still have "fun" resurrecting papers I wrote 30-35 years ago to deal with problems we are confronting today and which we are likely to confront in the years ahead. Is that sad or is it hopeful? I am not sure, but as I think about education and schooling and my own involvement, I cannot help reminding myself of how interesting, exciting, and unexpected it all has been for me."

A CAG FOLLOW-UP

Many of A. Harry Passow's writings have become classics in the field. A selected few include:

Passow, A., Goldberg, M, & Tannenbaum, A. (Eds.). (1967). *Education of the disadvantaged: A book of readings*. New York: Holt, Reinhart, & Winston.

Passow, A. (1982). *Differentiated curricula for the gifted/talented: A point of view*. Ventura, CA: Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Office. A paper prepared to reflect the majority opinion of the Curriculum Council and sponsored by the National/State Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted/Talented (N/S-LTI-G/T).

Passow, A. (1988). National Society for the Study of Education. Issues of access to knowledge: grouping and tracking. In L.N. Tanner (Ed.), *Critical Issues in Curriculum* (87th Yearbook, pp. 205–225). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Passow, A. (1989, May/June) Designing a global curriculum. *Gifted Child Today*, 24–26.

EXCERPTS

Dr. Passow's article "Differentiated Curricula for the Gifted/Talented" has particular relevance to the California Association for the Gifted in its current efforts to assist teachers in implementing differentiated curricula in their classrooms through our Teacher Institutes. It is an intention to reprint this work in its entirety in the near future. In the meantime, here is a portion of that work wherein he discusses the role of the teacher of gifted/talented in differentiating curricula. His ideas remain as fresh and valid as when written 15 years ago.

The teacher of the gifted/talented is often called a facilitator of learning or a manager of resources. He/she is clearly not just a dispenser of information. Perhaps the teacher is best described as the person responsible for arranging the conditions for learning.

In particular content areas or disciplines, teachers must have both the knowledge and the repertoire of skills needed to share this knowledge.

In some instances, especially going up the educational ladder, the needs and insights of gifted/talented students exceed those of the teacher. However, the teacher's maturity, broader perspective, and insights based on experience enable him/her to instruct the gifted/talented even when the student may "know more" about a particular topic.

DR. A. HARRY PASSOW - A REMARKABLE LIFE

1920	Born in Liberty, New York of Russian Jewish immigrant parents, never expecting to go to college
1938	Named valedictorian of high school graduating class; entered New York State Teachers College at Albany because it required no tuition. Became a high school math and science teacher.
1943	Called to active duty in the military; engaged in officers training in North Carolina
1944	Assigned to McClellan Airfield in Sacramento and served as a communications security officer in the Central Pacific Theater
1946	After discharge from the military, enrolled in a special program for returning veterans at Albany and earned his M.A. degree; taught two more years of high school math and science
1948	Invited to return to Albany as an Instructor supervising student teachers in mathematics. Enrolled in the doctoral program at Teachers College, Columbia University
1951	Completed doctorate and accepted a position as a Curriculum Associate with Teachers College's Citizen Education Project
1952	Became a Research Associate at the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute and also an Assistant Professor on the Teachers College faculty
1954	Initiated the Talented Youth Project and wrote *Are We Short-Changing the Gifted?* Continued with the project until it was phased out in 1966.
1958	Began a sabbatical in England to study its provisions for gifted youth.
1959	Returned to Teachers College and continued Talented Youth Project
1962	Began work on study of disadvantaged urban populations
1966	Began a major survey study of the public schools tracking system in Washington, D.C.
1967	Became a Senior Fulbright Professor at Stockholm University
1968	Appointed Department Chair at Teachers College
1972	Appointed to an endowed chair, the Jacob H. Schiff Professor of Education Chair at Teachers College
1975	Appointed Director of the Division of Educational Institutions and Programs, the largest division at the College in terms of students and faculty, while continuing as Department Chair
1975	Presented at the First World Conference on Gifted and Talented Children in London.
1979	Asked to establish a permanent Secretariat for the World Council and served as its Honorary Director.
1985	Elected to a four-year term as President of the World Council
1990	Served as a chief consultant in the establishment of the Israel Arts and Science Academy
1991	Retired from Teachers College, Columbia University
1995	Died at the age of 75

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Teachers of gifted/talented students cannot abdicate responsibility for the teaching/learning process. Different instructional goals and varying program designs necessitate different teaching strategies and styles. The teacher of the gifted/talented should be able to use a large number of strategies and skills to best serve the instructional demands of the gifted/talented. Making curricular decisions and encouraging self-directed learning are among the skills most conducive to fostering the development of gifted/talented learners.

Some view teaching the gifted/talented as simply a matter of "getting out of their way," letting them "do their own thing." We believe, however, that the teacher's role is more subtle. He/she must have a repertoire of instructional strategies, insights into resources, and understandings of how to stimulate gifted/talented children and youth to engage in appropriate learning activities. The teacher should help define broad parameters for individual investigations and other self-directive pursuits.

"The teacher of the gifted must have experiences which enable him/her to understand gifted children and accept them with their warts as well as their beauty spots."

A teacher cannot be expected to be an expert in all areas in which gifted/talented learners manifest their abilities. Teachers must have some knowledge of the structure of a discipline, how persons in that discipline frame problems, and how inquiry proceeds. Teachers need to be able to help youngsters understand what it is that specialists do, and how. The teacher's role involves helping the learner with problem definition and problem focusing. This role will vary with program design, classroom situations, and the particular needs and characteristics of gifted/talented learners.

What are the differential characteristics of the teacher of the gifted? The "job description" will depend on the school's definition of giftedness, its program and administrative design, the age-grade level of the youngsters, and curricular demands. Teachers must acquire insights into the origins, qualities, potential, attitudes, drives, and achievement of the gifted to counter misconceptions and stereotypes concerning such students. Teachers must reflect on their own attitudes toward giftedness—their own ability to accept divergency, nonconformity, and unconventional behaviors and attitudes, allowing the freest possible exchange of ideas and the widest variety of solutions to problems.

The teacher of the gifted must have a realistic awareness of the great range of exceptionalities and the broad sweep of different capabilities. The teacher of the gifted must have experiences which enable him/her to understand gifted children and accept them, with their warts as well as their beauty spots. The teacher must be flexible, able to inspire confidence and grasp the nature and techniques of inquiry. The teacher must have a sound knowledge base, tolerance for new and different ideas, a willingness to permit students to proceed on their own, and a concept of excellence which he/she can communicate to the students.

A. Harry Passow in 1989 with wife Shirley following her graduation ceremony from Rutgers Law School, Newark, NJ

A teacher with constantly expanding horizons of mastery and appreciation, ever deepening insights into a discipline; one whom students would respect and even emulate—such a teacher will probably be effective with gifted/talented students. In sum, the teacher of the gifted/talented must provide a role model for his/her students. For, in the end, it is crucial that teachers of the gifted/talented should instill a love of learning and creating, and inspire the pursuit of excellence, by modeling these qualities. ■

Biographical information gathered from *MILBANKWEB Exhibits & Publications, It's Been Interesting and Unexpected!* An Autobiography by A. Harry Passow, Jacob H. Schiff Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1991, and from personal information from his wife Shirley.

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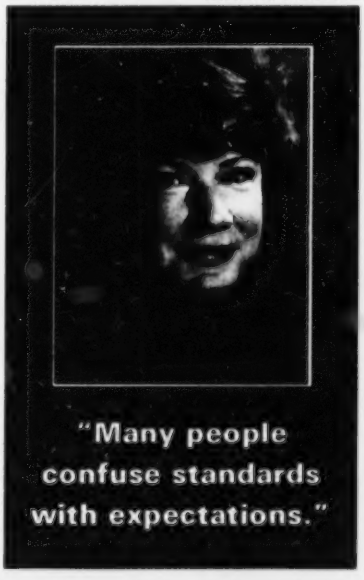
Writing Standards to Meet the Needs of GATE Students

BY CATHERINE BARKETT

—Pearl S. Buck

- What are standards?
- Who is writing the standards?
- When will the standards arrive?
- Will standards meet the needs of all students, including the gifted and talented?

These are some of the questions commonly heard as local, state, and national efforts are underway to design content standards (also called curriculum standards) which describe what teachers are supposed to teach and performance standards which define what students are expected to do. What can we do to ensure that the standards developed and used by schools are challenging enough to encourage all students to perform at the highest levels of which they are capable and lessen the probability that the standards will be used as a rallying point for battle?



"Many people confuse standards with expectations."

The first task of educators and parents involved in the development or adoption of standards is to agree on common terms. The word "standard" may mean different things to different people. Standard can refer to a "type, model, or example for comparison; a criterion of excellence; a standard of conduct." (*Funk and Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary*, 1973) It can also refer to the measurement of the extent to which we have attained that criterion. In other words, "standard" can refer to both the model and the measurement system for determining how well one attains the model.

Many people confuse standards with expectations. An expectation is what we assume students can and should be able to do at a particular grade level or age. A standard should represent the best work possible. For example, the following is an expectation:

> "At the end of second grade, virtually every child should: read grade level materials independently, demonstrate mastery of most phonic elements (e.g. consonants, vowels, blends, cluster, syllable, common phonics rules...)" (*Teaching Reading: A Balanced, Comprehensive Approach to Teaching Reading in Pre-Kindergarten Through Grade Three*, California Department of Education, 1996, p. 17)

We would expect students to be able to read by the end of second grade, and students who don't meet that expectation should be provided with additional assistance in order to develop their reading skills. Notice how the addition of a few small words changes the focus to encourage students to go *beyond* the expectation and allows flexibility which makes the expectation more appropriate for high end learners.

> "At the end of second grade, virtually every child should at least be able to: read grade level materials independently, demonstrate mastery of most phonics elements, etc."

Educators and community members involved in the development or adoption of standard can, with minor wording adjustments, ensure that expectations are not thought of as a ceiling or limit on how much students are expected to or even allowed to learn.

Legislation passed last year provides for the development of standards which will be used in future years for assessing the academic achievement of individual pupils and of schools, school districts, and the California education system. AB 265 (Chapter 975, Statues of 1995) created the Commission for the Establishment of Academic Content and Performance Standards. The Commission is comprised of 21 members, 12 of whom are appointed by the Governor, and six of whom are appointed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin. The Superintendent herself sits on the commission, and there is one member appointed by the Senate Rules Committee and one by the speaker of the assembly. The commission's central responsibility is to develop academically rigorous content and performance standards to be used in public schools maintaining kindergarten and grades 1 through 12. At least six public hearings on the draft standards will be held, and once the standards are adopted, the State Board of Education is required to review existing California Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks conformity with statewide standards.

The term "Content Standards" as defined in AB 265 means the specific academic knowledge, skills, and abil-

ities that all public schools in the state are expected to teach in each of the core curriculum areas at each grade level tested. "Performance Standards" refers to standards that define various levels of competence at each grade level in each of the curriculum areas for which content standards are established. Performance standards gauge the degree to which a student has met the content standards and the degree to which a school or school district has met the content standards.

In anticipation of the Commission's work, the Department of Education has established "Draft Interim Content and Performance Standards" for consideration by the Commission and for review and use by school districts prior to the adoption of statewide standards. They are available on the Department of Education's Website, called GOLDMINE. The Commission is currently beginning to review and analyze these draft standards as well as all other available local, state, national, and international standards. The Commission will first develop content and performance standards in reading, writing, and mathematics prior to developing standards in other content areas. Members of the Commission are grappling with the question of whether standards should reflect the basic knowledge and skills necessary for an individual to become literate in a subject area, or should they aim more towards some level of expertise in that subject?

As the Commission begins to put together recommended standards for California's public schools, educators and parents involved in the education of gifted and talented students will need to be very involved and vocal about whether or not they think the standards are appropriate for all students, including those capable of high end learning. As Grant Wiggins states in his excellent article, "Anchoring Assessment with Exemplars: Why Students and Teachers Need Models," (Wiggins, *Gifted Child Quarterly*, V40, #2, Spring 1996), "Progress is only possible by a system that assumes performers should work to overcome best performance instead of assuming its impossibility." If standards are set too low or are seen as a ceiling beyond which students should not rise, standards could actually depress the achievement levels of students. If, on the other hand, standards reflect the best possible performances, products, and specification in each curricular area, they will help all students excel.

Dates for public hearings on the standards are not yet set but will be published in the *Intercom* and *Communicator* as soon as they become available. Groups such as CAG are encouraged to set up special focus group sessions to analyze and provide input on the draft standards and to attend the public hearings. The draft standards will also be available via the Internet, and access information will be published through future CAG publications. ■

CATHERINE BARKETT is the Director of the Gifted and Talented Education, California Department of Education. An active supporter of CAG, she was a featured speaker at the annual CAG Conference, leading three workshops including "Content and Performance Standards— Implications for G/T Students" and organizing training sessions for district GATE coordinators before and after the conference.

Speak Your Mind

New column *Forum* to focus on hot topics

Beginning with the Summer 1997 issue, Communicator will be adding a new feature to its pages. This new column, Forum, will focus on the issues of the day, taking the hot-button topics and facing them head-on. We will explore a variety of issues in an open-letter debate format so you can speak your mind and hear what other educators, parents, and students have to say about the topic.

The focus of the next issue will be educational systems. The first topic for *Forum* will be: Which system provides the best education for the gifted student? Is it the traditional, with teachers as dispensers and facilitators of knowledge? Or is it the modern, with computers and technology at the head of the classroom? Which system will ultimately benefit special populations of children, delivering the best in curriculum and student development?

Write down your responses and send them to:

Lisa Heimlich, Associate Editor
for Special Projects
295 Buckingham Way, Apt. 503
San Francisco, CA 94132
E-mail: LisaR21@aol.com

Your letters will help make *Forum* a success. We look forward to hearing from you. ■

Keep it clean
Dolphins splashing
Flowers growing
Fish swimming
Trees helping
Moon glowing
Sun shining
Winds whistling
Keep our environment clean!

Alex Lyons-Smith
Age 8, Evergreen Elementary
Diamond Bar
Sandra Moritz, teacher

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L.A. Troupe Brings Literature to Life

BY CHERIE BROWN

&

KONI MCCURDY

"Julius Caesar was very interesting because it was, and is, so much like what is happening today in Mexico."

—Lisbeth Surella
Fremont High School

"Next time I write a poem, I'm going to use iambic pentameter."

—Alex Jenson

These students had just participated in an L. A. Troupe residency program, Surella on *Julius Caesar* and Jenson on *Romeo and Juliet*.

Students delight in discovering that although Julius Caesar and Romeo and Juliet were written 400 years ago, the ideas and language transcend time and that classical literature can be a tool to discover new ways to view and deal with problems and prejudices that they face today.

Since 1989 the L. A. Troupe, Theatre-in-Education, has worked closely with gifted and talented educators to bridge the gap between what students sometimes perceive as the dry, dusty, written word and the immediacy of a live performance.

Through performance, workshops, and residences, the L. A. Troupe challenges GATE students to discover the kinesthetic value of words as well as the complexities of social interaction and the results thereof. Consequently, GATE students are offered a hands-on experience of outstanding literature, a creative approach to problem-solving, and a cognitive awareness of the universal themes explored in classical works.

L. A. Troupe offers a variety of programs to benefit students including 45-minute performances followed by a workshop and residency programs consisting of four lessons. Staff is in the process of developing teacher training workshops.

Each production is staged in the manner best suited to the material. For example, whereas *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is fully costumed and includes a set representing the woods surrounding Athens, *Cultural Mythology* has no set and only minimal costumes to allow the actors and audience to move easily from one story to the other.

Following every show, a creative dramatics workshop is available. These workshops are as varied as the productions. Each workshop explores a concept intrinsic to the production. For instance, with *Edgar Allan Poe* students compare and contrast the way Poe creates horror to the way movies and television portray horror. Participants then use their voices and their bodies to create their own horrific mood.

Study Guides based on the California State Department of Education's *Framework for Visual and Performing Arts, English Language Arts, and History and Social Sciences* are included.

Every show also has a four-day residency program available prior to the production. A workshop coordinator will conduct up to four classes a day for four days, culminating in an L. A. Troupe performance on the fifth day. Flexible scheduling is available based upon the school's needs. Another alternative is for the residency participants to complete the program with their own performance in lieu of L. A. Troupe's performing.

As with the post-performance workshop, the residency also focuses on ideas that are unique to the literature. However, in this extended program residency participants are challenged to delve deeper into these concepts.

The following example provides a brief overview of the residency program for *Romeo and Juliet*.

Lesson one highlights Shakespeare's use of language in creating atmosphere and how the atmosphere relates to the theme of the play. Students consider contemporary words that create atmosphere and then develop their own atmospheric piece, thus exploring the kinesthetic value of words.

Artistic co-director Cherie Brown leads students in a workshop.

Lesson two acquaints students with the story of *Romeo and Juliet*. Students explore the rhythm of Shakespeare's blank verse by physically realizing the movement in iambic pentameter.

Lesson three helps students discover how Shakespeare used iambic pentameter as a clue to the character's emotional state.

L.A. Troupe portrays myths from around the world in *Cultural Mythology*.

Lesson four reviews iambic pentameter and provides the opportunity for the class to write and perform their own blank verse reflecting the mood and themes from *Romeo and Juliet*. The performance enables students to use their voices and their bodies to make these ideas leap to life. ■

CHERIE BROWN and KONI McCURDY are co-artistic directors for L. A. Troupe. Since 1989 over a million students have benefited from L.A. Troupe's unique blend of theatre and education. Regular presenters at CAG conferences, this year's workshop was entitled "Experience the Classics with the L. A. Troupe, Theatre-In-Education." For further information on L. A. Troupe, please call 1-800-287-6873.

L.A. TROUPE PRODUCTIONS

EDGAR ALLEN POE emphasizes imagination and the horror of the mind.

INDIAN LEGENDS OF THE AMERICAS features Native American myths and legends that resonate in the modern world.

PYGMALION examines speech as a contemporary social barrier.

THE ODYSSEY exemplifies heroism.

CULTURAL MYTHOLOGY portrays myths from around the world.

A DAY WITH KING ARTHUR'S KNIGHTS features Arthurian legends including "The Sword in the Stone" and "The Black Knight."

AMERICAN LEGENDS includes tales from the Revolutionary War including the Boston Tea Party and Longfellow's Paul Revere.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, ROMEO AND JULIET, and MACBETH are Shakespeare's classics with the language and the plot intact.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL re-enacts Dickens' ever-popular story.

HOLIDAY STORIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD highlights different celebrations including Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Chinese New Year.

Redding Artist Designs Logo for 35th Annual CAG Conference

BY ANGEL BARRETT

The logo for the 35th annual California Association for the Gifted conference was designed by Amanda Doherty of Redding, California. The 17-year-old Shasta High School senior submitted her drawing after reading about the contest in the associations's quarterly journal, the *Communicator*. CAG traditionally uses student artwork as the conference logo and additional submissions can be seen throughout the conference program.

Doherty's design incorporates the conference theme "Discovering Gold! Mining GATE Resources" by using symbols to represent some of the resources that students, educators and other GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) advocates bring to gifted and talented education. These resources include leadership (the gavel), knowledge (the book), excellence (the ribbon), special talents (paintbrush, musical note, and calculator), dedication (the diploma), and communication (the pencil).

Several of Doherty's works have been shown at the Redding Museum of Art and History and at Mercy Medical Center. She is currently in her third year of Advanced Placement Studio Art and is president of the National Art Honor Society. Although she usually draws in colored pencil, she also enjoys oil painting.

She hopes to pursue a career in virology and immunology. ■

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It's not the Internet... it's the information

BY IAN JUKES

Holy Cow! Just what the heck is going on here? Where did this thing called the Internet come from...and when did all these changes happen? It seems as if the Internet Revolution has literally snuck up and smacked us right between the eyes. Why didn't we see it coming?

Can you hearken back to the good old days when you weren't confronted with gee-whiz articles about the Internet every time you opened a magazine or newspaper or turned on a TV? Do you remember when surfing was done outdoors with a bathing suit? When Java was something you drank with cream and sugar? When the phrase "http://spend.lotsa.bucks" wasn't highlighted at the bottom of every magazine ad or TV commercial? And particularly when you didn't need to know, let alone have to explain, what the @ sign meant?

What Happened?

It may be hard to believe that for a number of us, it's been a matter of months rather than years since the Internet first barged into our lives. Oh sure, the Internet may have been floating around on the periphery for quite some time, but for many of us, until quite recently it seems to have been flying well below our personal radar screens.

Then in what seemed like the blink of an eye, it erupted—overnight creating a roaring blaze of excitement as it began spreading like wildfire. Virtually unheralded, the Internet has arrived!

Today it is well on its way to becoming the infrastructure for virtually every company and every industry in the marketplace. In the process it has rapidly become the world's largest economic sector with a combined economic and transactional value which has surpassed that of oil and steel.

As a result, we are now in the midst of an incredible communications revolution. Internet fever has struck the nation and is driving many of the fundamental changes in business, the community, and in our personal lives, and it has become the de facto new communication reality for the 21st century.

But When Did it Happen?

For many users things really began to heat up during the spring and summer of 1995 with the introduction and widespread distribution of graphical user interface browser tools for the Internet. The newly realized ability to easily navigate the previously harrowing world of the Internet simply by using the point and click of a mouse rather than the mystical tongues and bizarre nuances of text-based instruction was for many a semi-religious experience. Suddenly, access that had been previously limited to a small priesthood of nerds and techno-weenies was available to the masses. Almost overnight, interest in exploring the Net went from geekhood to coolness and from a specialized thing done by specialists and semi-experts to something that was deeply imbedded in the public consciousness

The impact of point-and-click access on the opening of the Internet cannot be understated.

What really illustrates this trend is the growth in commercial Web sites. In 1994 there were none. Now it seems that everyone and their dog is trying to register a home page or domain. Largely as a result of the introduction of the Graphical User Interface, the number of commercial sites worldwide is in the mid-six figures. The exact number is reluctantly withheld as it would only serve to quickly date this article.

To put this number into perspective, the information search tool and resource cataloguer Yahoo now receives in excess of 3,500 applications *daily* for inclusion in the

Yahoo Website catalog. This trend is repeated again and again with the dozens of other Website cataloguers in existence today. As a result, the Internet is now doubling in size approximately every 60 days or about six times a year! To put this into perspective, if the rate continues unabated (and there is no reason to doubt that it will), the number of sites that exist today will represent only 10% of the sites that will exist one year from today—something that for many is almost beyond comprehension. To put it bluntly, what we're experiencing today with the emergence of the Internet represents biological growth, like red tides or lemmings, that is of a scope and scale that is almost unheard of in the history of humankind.

The great e-mail explosion

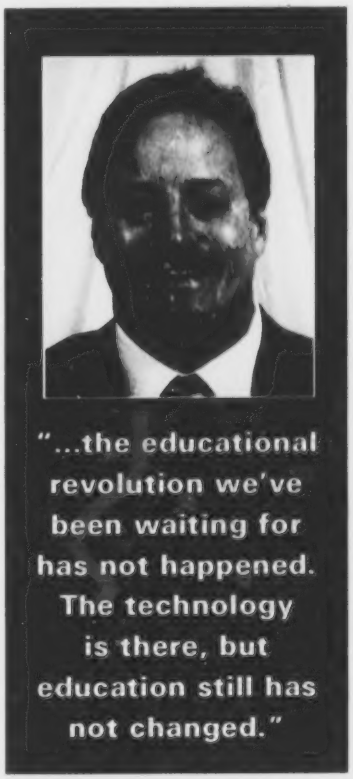
At the same time as the number of Web sites is growing exponentially, the use of electronic mail is exploding. In the U.S. alone it's estimated that more than 32 million e-mail messages are sent daily. This volume represents the equivalent of more than $9,000,000 worth of first class mail every day.

But who's sending all of these messages? Although the total volume of mail delivered by the post office is up 5% since 1988, business mail volume is down by 33% during the same period. What do you suppose might happen to the mail volume when kids, seniors, and parents discover the power of e-mail to instantaneously communicate anytime and anywhere?

Some readers may remember that the communication speed innovation of the 1980s was the overnight delivery of mail. With the emergence of e-mail as a common information delivery vehicle, increasingly the only stuff that will go through the post office will be the things that we're not really in a hurry to send—the at-risk mail. While there will likely always be a place for "snail mail," with the increased dependence on e-mail, it would appear that many of the services currently provided by the post office are on the verge of becoming one giant piece of road kill on the new Information Highway.

And We "Ain't" Done Yet!

There was a time not so very long ago when cyberspace was really only for modem jockeys—now it's become a middle class suburb. And this has happened in a world


"...the educational revolution we've been waiting for has not happened. The technology is there, but education still has not changed."

of $2,500 computers with which trying to communicate using the Internet can often be like trying to suck peanut butter through a straw. But what's going to happen tomorrow when users have widespread access to $500 network computers that will be combined with the widely heralded cable modems that are capable of speeds literally hundreds of times faster than the fastest modems available today? What will that do to Internet usage? Will it stay the same, go down, or accelerate through the ceiling? Three guesses—the first two don't count!

Net Effect

Up front, it's important to acknowledge that there is still a great deal of controversy and many problems related to the slowness, security, inappropriate usage, under/over regulation, and potential overload of the Internet. Beyond this, there rages an enormous controversy as to how many regular users of the Internet there really are at this time. Be this as it may, there can be no controversy about the fact that the Internet is coming at us like a tidal wave. As a result, it's practically impossible to overstate the importance of what's happening today. The rapid emergence of this new global information tool has opened communications to the masses and quickly moved the Internet toward full-fledged status as a viable commercial medium.

Years of Hype and Hope

Just what has the Internet done to us? Business has taken it on and transformed itself; we know that. But how has the rapid emergence of the Internet affected schools? Are we getting anywhere? Since the late '70s, literally billions of dollars and trillions of words have been spent on studying the importance of technology and then getting it into schools. In the mid 1990s technological spending in K-12 public schools topped four billion dollars per year—twice the amount spent on textbooks during the same period.

Yet somehow this influx of cash and best intentions has not created the transformation education has been expecting for the last few years. The commitment is there, but the goal still seems elusive. We can't lose sight of the prize—the goal of getting students prepared for the next century. It still has to happen. The solution does not necessarily include more technology, however. The answer lies in learning how to use the technology properly.

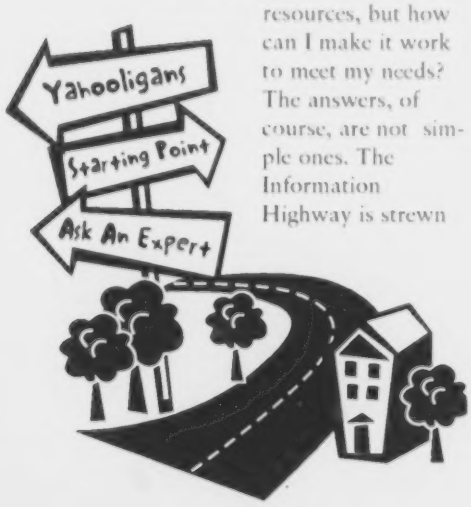
For many educators this commit-

See INTERNET, 46

The Internet and Gifted Students: Making the Connections

BY KAREN KRUPNICK

References to the Internet are everywhere today. Even the cartoons mention E-mail and the Web. Billboards, commercials, and advertisements all carry Web addresses as a part of their promotional material. We have been told that the Internet is a necessity for every classroom in our country, and schools across the nation are being wired at a rapid pace. It is natural, therefore, for a teacher to wonder: now that the Internet is in my classroom, how do I use it with my gifted students? The Internet is loaded with resources, but how can I make it work to meet my needs? The answers, of course, are not simple ones. The Information Highway is strewn



with a lot of litter, but it is also an excellent route to many wonderful locations. The first and most obvious use is that of a research tool. Search engines are available that allow you to cull through the enormous network and find the information that you need. There are differences between the various search engines, and you have to experiment with them in order to find the strengths and weaknesses of each.

Elementary school children need assistance in learning the art of searching. Once a student types in a subject to search, a list of sites will appear that contain that term. Most search engines have a brief description of what you will find in the site listed, but decisions about which sites are of value is not an easy task. A fair amount of experience will be needed before a student will be able to select the reliable sites listed in any search. Once a student masters the art of searching, the Internet will become a valuable source of information.

There is a search engine designed for children called Yahooligans (http://www.yahooligans.com) that you may find useful. Another search engine, Starting Point (http://www.stpt.com), is a metasearcher and allows you to simultaneously search several engines at once.

On-line mentorship is another valuable benefit of the Internet. Since most colleges and universities are on-line, there is a vast network of academic experts available by E-mail. There are quite a few sites that have links to experts in a diverse variety of areas, and all that is needed is a click on the one you want. These three sites offer many choices:

- Ask An Expert Page: http://njnie.dl.stevens-tech.edu/curriculum/aska.html
- Pitsco's Ask An Expert Page: http://www.askanexpert.com/askanexpert/askanexpert.html
- Ask a Scientist Page: http://intergate.humboldt.k12.ca.us/score/noframes/sites.html

By connecting with the professionals listed at these sites, students will be able to ask questions pertaining to their own research. If they are not able to find the information that they need from the experts listed at the above sites, they can seek out their own mentors by looking into faculty lists at universities that are on the Web. The names of these institutions are available at the Ask An Expert Web sites listed above.

Experts can also be found by writing to the webmasters of relevant Web pages or by perusing professional newsgroups in the area of research for knowledgeable discussion participants.

Research materials and mentors are good starting points when exploring the vast resources of the Internet, but they represent only the tip of the iceberg. As you and your students become more comfortable with the environment, there are endless educational opportunities to be found. You will discover interactive projects, mailing lists, and newsgroups that allow communication between students and teachers around the globe. There are also "cool" educational sites that enhance curriculum and make lessons come alive. So don't wait another minute. Head for the the nearest on ramp to the Information Superhighway and enjoy your trip. ■

KAREN KRUPNICK is a GATE Mentor Teacher at Litel Elementary School in the Chino Unified School District. She is also the author of *Kids@School.onthenet*, a book of Internet-based activities published by Learning Works in March, 1997.

CAG Awards 1997

Awards of Recognition

An Award of Recognition is given to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to gifted education as an educator, parent, legislator, national leader, or in any other capacity.

RICK SIMPSON

For the last two decades Rick Simpson, staff member in both the State Assembly and the Senate, has been CAG's Capitol contact. As a seeker of excellence in education, he has shared technical expertise and educational issues knowledge with GATE advocates. He has clarified legislative issues, formulated new laws, and enlisted legislative support for GATE program improvement. Rick Simpson's influence has been significant.

DENNIS FREITAS

On a volunteer basis, Dennis Freitas has worked hundreds, if not thousands of hours to set up and maintain the CAG webpage. In just one short year, the CAG webpage has grown to 43 hardcopy pages. One can now easily learn about the many services CAG has to offer both parents and educators with information regarding its leadership regional representatives, political involvement, teacher training opportunities, publications, the annual conference, and more. He continues to add to the webpage content to make it easily accessible and professional, and is looking for additional ways that the webpage can serve the cause of gifted education.

MAUREEN DiMARCO

Throughout her career from classroom aide, district trustee, consultant to then-State Superintendent Bill Honig, president of the California School Boards Association board, to being appointed by Governor Pete Wilson as the state's first Secretary for Child Development and Education, Maureen DiMarco has the well-being and support of all students in mind. This was always evident in her unfailing interest in the programs designed for gifted and talented youngsters. She has supported CAG with her keen insight, her expert questioning style, and her practical experience in living and working with gifted youngsters. She has always been available to educators who are willing to work to make things better for the students of California.

Ruth A. Martinson Past Presidents' Award

This award is presented by the past presidents to an individual for a "significant contribution that has sustained national impact on the education of the gifted." This year it is presented posthumously to Dr. A. Harry Passow.

A. HARRY PASSOW

Dr. Passow spent well over 40 years as a constituent and vital voice, speaking and writing on behalf of the educational needs of gifted students. Harry Passow was a professor at Teachers College, Columbia University, President of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC), and a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC). His career spanned many professional organizations in curriculum and instruction as well as gifted education.

May V. Seagoe Scholarship Award

The May V. Seagoe Scholarship Award is awarded to foster excellent within gifted education, encourage commitment toward service to gifted students, and promote an understanding of giftedness through research. This year the award is presented to Aleta Lepper.

ALETA LEPPER

Aleta Lepper is pursuing her master's degree at the University of Connecticut. Currently teaching at Lincoln Elementary School, she is also a Teacher of the Year from the Pacific Region.

SOCRATES LIVES

BY STEVEN P. KAHL

Although today's students often lack the technology, books, and other materials they need, one of the greatest educators in human history did a remarkable job teaching with none of these resources.

Although he didn't even have an overhead projector and he hasn't taught for 2,400 years, Socrates' pedagogy survives and even thrives in some school districts.

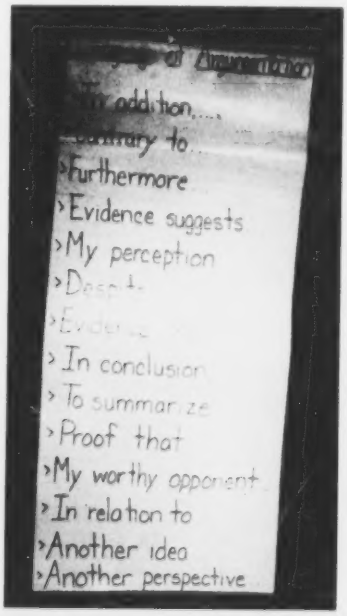
Socratic seminar is the ancient method of exploring archetypal concepts including justice, truth, love, honor, government, goodness, and nature. Socrates believed that the job of the teacher was to question rather than to tell. In fact, he believed that people are all born with a subconscious, but thorough, knowledge of these ideas and that teacher inquiry can transmit this knowledge into students' conscious minds.

American philosopher Mortimer Adler notes that educators excel at teaching knowledge (through lecture and readings) and at teaching skills (through coaching and practice). However, many lack expertise in teaching students about essential ideas necessary to live life purposefully and ethically. Socratic seminar fills that void.

In his *Paideia Proposal*, Adler recommends that all students be regularly engaged in seminar but acknowledges that most teachers have not been trained in the method. Although some college professors call their class discussions "seminars," they often talk more than all the students combined. They also test on their ideas, not on those of the student.

Some educators may consider Socratic seminar to be better suited to universities and high schools; nevertheless, Socratic seminar can be just as successful in elementary and middle schools, where students begin to shape their moral codes. Even kindergarten teachers can facilitate philosophical inquiry by reading aloud a story and asking questions such as, "Did the little boy do the right thing by telling his parents about the spill? Why do you think so?" Out of the resulting discourse, children learn to think through moral decision making.

In Socratic seminar training, teachers practice with colleagues, taking turns in facilitating discussion. After attending a training session, high school English teacher Liz Daniell of San Jose wrote, "This is the type of method that I wish I had been offered in my teachers' education program. It focuses on the students, allowing them to develop a powerful voice and to become agents of their own education."



This wall chart provides a visual reminder of the language of argumentation. Attaching the chart to a wire hanger enables the teacher to move the chart wherever it is needed.

When teachers introduce the technique to their students, they often find that the children have as many trepidations about this new method as their teachers. Nevertheless, most students quickly acclimate themselves to the standard procedure for seminar.

Standard Procedure

Reflection

After reading a thoughtful essay, short story, novel, newspaper article, or historical document, students spend several minutes writing an answer to a provocative questions.

For example, students might deliberate over one of the following questions:

- Of the 12 major characters, who is most responsible for the deaths of Romeo and Juliet?
- Would Gardner equate the value of athletic skill with that of intrapersonal intelligence?
- How would Rawls view the decision to drop the atom bomb on Japanese cities?
- Is zero a number?
- Does Mark Twain believe that Huck Finn makes ethical decisions?
- Do the members of Pecola Breedlove's family love each other?
- Would the writer of "Wisdom and Knowledge" conclude that wisdom can be taught?
- Is Dave Barry funny in his essay about war?
- Does Richard Rodriguez contradict himself on bilingual education in *Hunger of Memory*?
- Which is better art—the painting by Picasso or the painting by Jackson Pollock?
- (Using the number line as a focus) Did human beings invent mathematics or discover it?

Discussion

After allowing sufficient time for written reflection, the teacher asks the seminar question again, telling students they may begin

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

the seminar when they feel comfortable. After a few seconds of uncomfortable silence, students hazard to answer the question aloud, and then other students in turn respond to the idea, creating an evolving web of thought as the discussion develops.

For the next four minutes or so, the students who are arranged in a circle collectively answer the question. The teacher comments only occasionally, summarizing the group's ideas, asking for textual support and definitions of terms, and posing further questions based on the students' comments.

Because Socratic seminar aims to develop the students' ideas, the teacher talks only when the students have been silent for more than 10 full seconds. For many novice seminar leaders, this wait time is painful. Once students become comfortable with the format, however, such silence is rare.

As a skilled facilitator, the teacher supports students in their exploration of abstract values and principals, allowing them to use the examined reading as a launch pad for higher level thinking. Within reason, teachers need not worry about the seminar going off track, as the students will explore the ideas they find interesting and applicable to their own lives.

Because it promotes student-centered inquiry, Socratic seminar restricts the teacher from offering his ideas about the central document. Teachers may use the method didactically, but only when they inform their students of their intention beforehand. Otherwise, students find the value of their intellectual exploration nullified by a teacher's right answer at the end of a session.

By encouraging children to pursue a collectively reasoned judgment rather than a single, correct answer, seminar teaches them to be comfortable with ambiguity, thereby preparing them for the real-life complexities of citizenship, relationships, and the workplace.

Evaluation

When the class period draws to an end, the teacher ends the seminar, leaving the last 8 to 10 minutes of class to process and evaluate the discussion. After identifying the strengths of their performance, the students offer suggestions for improving future seminars.

Over time, the class collects these indicators of success to create an evolving rubric for excellence in seminar that allows each participant to gauge personal and group achievement. Because they create the guidelines for themselves, they are more likely to follow them.

After each discussion, students write self-evaluations in their Socratic seminar notebooks at home, tracking the development of their thinking, speaking, and social skills.

At the end of the year, students write about the effect of the method on their maturity—and their intellectual and social development. Often students notice that they have become more civil in the way they treat one another and that everyone seems to respect everyone else.

By June students have participated in 15–20 seminars, one or two per unit of instruction. They consistently credit the method for making them better thinkers and more articulate speakers and for bringing the curriculum to life.

Indeed, even if he did swallow hemlock, Socrates lives in the American classroom; multitudes of highly engaged students are happy he does. ■

STEVEN P. KAHL is a full-time teacher and the GATE coordinator at Independence High School in San Jose. He presented a workshop, "Using Socratic Seminar in Classrooms of All Grade Levels," at the 35th annual CAG conference and has led staff development throughout California.

LANGUAGE OF ARGUMENTATION

Socratic seminar is an excellent opportunity to reinforce the language of argumentation.

Sample vocabulary might include:

opinion
fact
proof
evidence
another point of view
an interesting perspective
an additional idea
in conclusion
to summarize
clarify
therefore
paraphrase
retell
restate
edit
editorialize
evaluate

—Steven Kahl

SIGHTS OF THE WORLD

Pyramids rising past the evening clouds,
Castles gleaming with silver knights,
Panthers roaming through damp and wet jungles,
Scientists exploring newly found alcoves,
Thundering rivers streaming into calm oceans,
Elaborate-colored birds flying across the earth,
Majestical mountains stretching from north to south,
Deer scurrying in dark, dark forests,
Newly born butterflies flying out of shattered cocoons,
Deep, mystical caves glowing with wonderful rocks,
Magnificent clouds shooting out driving sheets of rain

—Adit Shah age 9
The Mirman School

The annual CAG Teacher of the Year Awards were handed out at this year's conference in Sacramento, March 1997. The awards honor one teacher in each region for outstanding contributions to the education of gifted and talented students. Here are this year's winners:

BAY AREA REGION
Patricia Crowley, Ed. D.
Grades 4-5, Redding Elementary School, San Francisco USD

Dr. Crowley has demonstrated excellence in teaching gifted and talented students in a number of ways. She provides a learning environment rich in challenges at multiple levels, encouragement to pursue interests and strengths, support and nurturing for multiple intelligences, and regular opportunities for students to extend learning beyond the classroom walls. She was San Francisco's Teacher of the Year in 1986 and has also been nominated for California Teacher of the Year. She was recognized in *Learning* in 1989 for innovative practices in teaching. Dr. Crowley also participates in the district's annual GATE Curriculum Fair, exhibiting students' work and sharing ideas and lessons with teachers and parents. She published a doctoral dissertation "Heterogeneity Among Gifted and Talented Students on Cognitive and Creative Tasks" while at the University of San Francisco as well as curriculum units and various handbooks.

CAPITOL REGION
Ron Kremer
Grade 3, Sutterville Elementary School, Sacramento City USD

Mr. Kremer demonstrates a commitment to gifted education by opening up his classroom to the community. Students from the California State University are assigned to his classroom each semester. He also conducts seminars on campus to teach students about gifted children and effective instructional strategies. Every year, he plans, constructs, and implements a "Family Math and Science Night" where families come to the school and participate in hands-on activities in learning stations designed around occupations and academic content. He has published *From Crystals to Kites: Exploring Three Dimensions and Squares and Cubes* for Dale Seymour Publications as well as other math games and books. He has served as a state Science Fair judge as well as a math consultant for the University of California at Davis.

JOSHUA TREE REGION
Ed Berman
Grades 9-12, Pacific High School, San Bernardino City USD

Mr. Berman teaches honors English, a GATE Drama Class for Mock Trials, and remedial English at the high school level. He also teaches senior advanced writing and freshman writing at California State University, San Bernadino. The Mock Trial team he coordinates garnered 16 awards at the county competition. He instituted a junior thesis as a hands-on, required project at Pacific High School. He also has his students prepare their own novels for a children's literature collection. He's listed in *Who's Who in American Education*. He wrote an article for the journal *Language Arts* concerning the use of multiple intelligences for the GATE learner. He also scores essays and speeches for the Academic Decathlon.

MISSION REGION
Jane Hancock
Grades 10-11, Hoover High School, Glendale USD

Mrs. Hancock's classroom is a center for student teachers, observers, and visitors. Her door is always open to other teachers who want to talk about Writer's Workshop, alternative forms of assessment, multiple intelligences, student-centered classrooms, and portfolios. In addition to being a classroom teacher, Mrs. Hancock is

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Associate Director of the UCLA Writing Project. She has also been a fellow and a member of the advisory board of the California Literature Project. She has directed the Summer Invitational Writing Project and the Open Project several times and has been responsible for the Young Writers' Summer Programs and the Young Writers' Retreat at Lake Arrowhead. She has been honored as Glendale Unified School District Teacher of the Year, Los Angeles County Teacher of the Year, and Glendale Masonic Lodge Teacher of the Year. She also runs a coffee house in the high school library where students can share their writing.

MT. SHASTA REGION
Chrissie Hamilton Clapp
Grades 2-8, Various schools, Red Bluff USD

Mrs. Clapp works with the staff and students at all four schools in her district, teaching the GATE program in grades two through eight. She expands the minds of her students by participating in projects such as History Day at the local and state levels. She recognizes each student's individual abilities and strengths, providing them with resources to broaden their knowledge often from her own personal collection. For several years, she has coached Odyssey of the Mind which involves many evenings after school and competitions on Saturdays. Her students have learned to work together and produce award-winning projects.

ORANGE REGION
Lorraine Test
Grades 2-3, Walter Knott Elementary School, Centralia Elementary SD

In addition to teaching her second and third grade high achieving and gifted students, Mrs. Test is also the school's gifted and talented program instructor and runs an extended-day program where Building Blocks to GATE Success is taught to first through sixth graders. She promotes a high standard of excellence through a positive and exciting arena for the development of scholars. She encouraged and voluntarily coached a team for the Academic Pentathlon in which her students took both second and third places in the competition in the team's first year. She also leads students in the California Math League. She also actively seeks grants for her school, garnering one through the Statewide REACH Literacy Initiative.

PACIFIC REGION
Aleta Lepper
Grades 4-5, Lincoln Elementary School, Ventura USD

Ms. Lepper has been very successful in providing differentiated curriculum instruction to her students over the years. Due to her success, she was requested to teach in a school-wide pull-out program for all gifted students at Lincoln School. She has finished the CAG Certificate of Completion and is currently working on her master's degree under Drs. Sally Reis and Joseph Renzulli at the University of Connecticut. As a parent of three gifted children, she was a founding member of PAGE (Parents and Advocates for Gifted Education), the parent support group for her district. She has twice been selected as a district GATE mentor teacher with the task of advocating for gifted students district-wide and assisting teachers in their work with gifted students. She also established and edits *The GATE Post*, a newsletter written for and by teachers emphasizing suggestions for classroom activities appropriate for gifted students and resources available to support a differentiated curriculum.

PALOMAR REGION
Jim Riley
Grades 5-6, Hawthorne Elementary School, San Diego City Schools

Mr. Riley exhibits an enthusiasm for learning and teaching that is contagious. He offers a curriculum of advanced mathematics, first-year algebra, Latin, and classical mythology. His classroom vibrates with energy, and he demonstrates an intuitive understanding of the needs of gifted students. Last year, he received the Association of San Diego Educators of the Gifted Educator of the Year award and the San Diego City Schools Teacher Scholar Award for his lifelong pursuit of learning. He also teaches a weekly after-school magic class to students in grades three through six. He was one of the authors of the sixth grade teacher's edition for the ScottForesman science series, *Discover the Wonder*.

REDWOOD REGION
Helga Burns
Grades 9-12, Del Norte County High School, Del Norte USD

Mrs. Burns currently teaches Biology 2, a second-year biology class for students interested in going on into science in college, and Advanced Placement biology. In the GATE program her inspiration, enthusiasm, and support have helped bring success to the Del Norte High School Odyssey of the

Mind and Knowledge Master teams. In their first year of participation, the two Odyssey of the Mind teams won the regionals in their divisions and the senior team was awarded OMer, the sportsmanship award, at state competition. Also in their first year, the Knowledge Master team placed 13th in the state. As the GATE facilitator, Mrs. Burns has much to do to find ways to meet the varied needs of more than 150 gifted and talented students.

SAN JOAQUIN REGION
Bob Jost
Grade 6, Manchester GATE School, Fresno USD

Mr. Jost's instructional approaches demonstrate the importance of a challenging curriculum for all gifted students while still individualizing to address special skills and needs. He has been recognized for his mentoring of gifted students by the Johns Hopkins Center of Talented Youth and is listed in *Who's Who Among American Elementary Teachers*. He is also continually differentiating curriculum for gifted learners and developing his own technology curriculum. He is a national trainer of teachers for GLOBE (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment), an international project using students as scientists to collect environmental data with scientific agencies like NOAA, NASA, and EPA. Their information is shared with the general public via the Internet. Through his connections with GLOBE, he recently held a Saturday workshop for parents and students to communicate on the Internet with people around the world beginning with a message from Vice President Al Gore.

SANTA LUCIA REGION
John McPherson
Grade 6, Nordstrom Elementary School, Morgan Hill USD

Mr. McPherson has served as a district mentor teacher with an emphasis on math, science, fine arts, and gifted education. As a trained and experienced field scientist, he brings real life experience to his classroom and provides his students with simulated life situations. All of his lessons contain higher-level thinking skills and challenges to stimulate the most inquisitive mind. In 1991 he was nominated as an "Outstanding Educator" from the Johns Hopkins University Institute for the Academic Achievement of Youth and was awarded a fellowship from them. He has also been recognized in *Who's Who in American Education*. He has also received mentorships from the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose and from the Monterey Bay Aquarium, where he was chosen as part of a team that composed an advanced science curriculum for state-wide implementation.

DREAMERS

Late at night, when the lights are out,
When my eyes are shut,
And the house is silent,
Swirls of color and emotion,
Appear in my eyes.
A breeze brushes by my face,
Water splashes onto me,
As I smile.
All around me is life and joy.
I open my eyes to reality.
A cold, dark night.
A while later, the dream again lives.
The color is back and the bleakness is gone.
My spirit soars in this world of power,
While at the reality, it is no more than a dark, cold night,
As my body lies motionless on my bed.
Many don't want to leave the night,
Fearing that the world where they will travel to in their slumber,
Is a place where murderers are kings,
And the thieves are the common folk.
They are the dreamers,
Why won't they wake up?

Nataniel Jones, age 11
Grade 6, Chaparral Middle School
Marion Buxton, teacher

1997 Student Grants

CAG highlights students' dreams and innovations

BY LISA HEIMLICH

Every year, CAG awards grants to deserving students who desire to extend their educational experiences. The purpose of these awards is to assist GATE students in an area of interest or achievement in a project or process related to their learning. Here are this year's winners:

JAY CHAN, 5th grade, age 10
Litel ES, Chino Unified School District

Will use the grant to participate in the EPGY interactive computer class at Stanford this spring.

FIDEL SANCHEZ, 12th grade, age 17
Camarillo HS, Oxnard Union High School District

Will use the grant to study with poet Jack Grapes in an advanced seminar.

ANDREW SPENCER, 10th grade, age 15
Ocean View HS, Huntington Beach Unified School District

Will buy a scanner that will allow him to create an on-line Web page that will be an interactive reference and discussion site on early American history.

BRYAN VINE, 9th grade, age 14
Temple City HS, Temple City Unified School District

Will buy a video capture card that will allow him to animate figures from three-dimensional wire models.

Take a look at the letter from Adam Hargis-Bullen on page 3. He helped an entire school with his 1996 CAG Student Grant.

Send your stories, poems, art work, puzzles and suggestions to: Linda Brug, 3721 Sheldon Drive, Ventura, CA 93003.

Students at the CAG Conference—Why?

BY SHARON A. FREITAS

Students at the CAG conference—why are they here, walking around the convention center? What is their role and what do they gain?

Beginning in 1978, the CAG conference included a three-day program for students, conceived so that children of conference attendees could take advantage of the historical and cultural location of the conference. For the first CAG conference held in Sacramento, the committee put together a three-day experience for students to visit the historical museums in Old Sacramento, Sutter's Fort, and Crocker Art Museum with its exceptional collection of early California art. Over 150 students, ages nine and older, spent the daylight hours touring sites and picnicking in parks. Movies, storytelling, and old-time dancing filled the evening hours when conference attendees were at adult offerings. The local volunteers in charge only got relief when students went back to the hotels for a night's rest.

The same format was used for conferences at Disneyland, San Diego, Los Angeles, Oakland, and other conference sites. Students were given behind-the-scenes tours of Sea World and art museums. The event was opened to students from the local area to satisfy the growing demand from local parents.

The Youth Conference as it became known, then evolved into an away experience with students leaving the conference site for two or three days to travel to places like Catalina Island and Yosemite and do exciting things like snorkeling and snowshoeing—especially beneficial to students who never had these experiences in their own lives. Soon, the problems in finding chaperones, keeping costs rea-

See CONFERENCE, 28

word phun

BY JUDY FLEISCHMANN

Do you like puzzles? Anagrams are word puzzles. You can rearrange words to make other words and solve puzzles. When making anagrams, it is easiest by placing each letter on a card or tile so you can easily move the letters around. (Answers on page 28.)

1. Rearrange the letters in each of these words to make three new words:

   EAT STAR TIMES BEARS TEARS

   AMEN STONE SCARE LIVE

2. Try making two or more new words from each of these words:

   TABLES LARGE PRIEST DIAPERS

The most clever anagrams are those in which the words are related to each other. If we rearrange the letters that form ARGUMENTS we can make MUST ANGER.

3. **MOONLIGHT becomes** _____
4. **THE PIANO BENCH was** _____
5. **H.M.S. PINAFORE is** _____
6. **THE COUNTRYSIDE has** _____
7. **A GENTLEMAN is an** _____

JUDY FLEISHMANN is an administrative assistant at the Pegasus School in Huntington Beach, CA.

Rearrange the underlined letters and using the clues in the sentences, create the anagram.

8. **The ropes were untied, but now they are joined.**
9. **To boil the eggs, you need lids on these pots.**
10. **A rope was used in the musical show.**
11. **Unlucky numbers may be obtained by mixing three tins.**
12. **Here comes dots and dashes to encrypt a secret message.**

Puns are another way to have fun with words. Puns are used in a humorous way to suggest different meanings to words that have similar sounds but different meanings. Many first names are homonyms. Puns can be made with them. Guess these names.

To the girl blessing the food, I said, "Grace..."

13. **To the boy changing the car tire, I said, "** _____ **"**
14. **To the boy using the sound system, I said, "** _____ **"**
15. **To the boy who hit the baseball over the fence, I said, "** _____ **"**

Learning to be a lion tamer, that's Claude.

16. **Always in court, that's** _____
17. **Sending Morse Code, that's** _____
18. **A morning person, that's** _____
19. **Great at playing the drums, that's** _____
20. **Long overdue, that's** _____

WORD PU??LES

BY BETH ANDREWS

Positively Puzzling

Warm up your brain and see if you can solve these puzzles. Each box below contains a portion of the name of a city and state of the U.S.; city on the top, state underneath. Can you pick the city and state? Hint: the East is well-represented. (Answers on page 28.)

1. LTI RYL	2. CHM GIN	3. ELP SYL
4. LBA WYO	5. VID ISL	6. STO ACH

Changelings

Can you change the first word into the second word by changing only one letter at a time? Do not rearrange the order of the letters with each change. Each change must result in a real, everyday word; and words beginning with a capital letter, slang,or obsolete words are not allowed. The number in the parentheses indicates the number of changes we used for each Changeling. (Answers on page 28.)

Example: TINY to BIRD (4)

TINY (1)TINs (2)bINS (3) BINd (4) BirD

1. WISH to GIFT (4)
2. SLOPE to SPORT 4)
3. PACE to WORK (4)
4. HELP to HAND (4)
5. GAIN to YARD (4)
6. BOWL to GAME (5)
7. VANS to MOVE (5)
8. HELP to HOST (5)
9. JOBS to HIRE (5)
10. COZY to ROOM (6)

BETH ANDREWS is a GATE Mentor in the Irvine Unified School District.

How California Came To Be

Long ago there were two spirits. They looked down at the water. One spirit said, "Let's create some land, the sea looks so bare."

But the other spirit said, "How will we create land?" They thought and thought. Finally, they thought of something. They would create five fish and have a spider weave a web on their backs. After the web had been woven, they would pack mud on it. So, that is what they did. The fish were made, the web woven, and the mud was packed.

Now it was time to create valleys, mountains, rivers, plants, animals, and people. They pressed the palms of their hands on California to create mountains, valleys, and hills. Then they made holes in California where they wanted lakes and from them they dragged their finger along where they wanted rivers. They made trees from mud and the spirits made animals from clay. Then they brought these things to life.

There was a problem. The fish quarreled. The earth trembled. They tried to swim apart. The spirits said, "Stop!" The fish stopped quarreling.

Now it was time to create people. They used eagle down for hair, berries for eyes and clay for a body. After they brought them to life.

The two spirits gave the people seeds for food, flowers, shrubs, trees, and grasses. They planted all the seeds and made California beautiful. But, in some places it was too arid. Those spots are now called deserts.

That is why we have earthquakes, valleys, mountains, lakes, and rivers in our state of California.

Elizabeth Hoyt
Grade 4
Park Western Place
Harbor Math Science Magnet

SOLUTIONS FOR WURD PHUN

1. EAT - TEA, ATE, ETA
   STAR - TARS, RATS, ARTS
   TIMES -EMITS, MITES,SMITE, ITEMS
   BEARS - BARES, SABER, BASER
   TEARS -RATES, ASTER, STARE
   AMEN - MEAN, MANE, NAME
   STONE - TONES, NOTES, ONSET
   SCARE - CARES, ACRES, RACES
   LIVE - EVIL, VILE, VEIL
2. TABLES - STABLE, ABLEST
   LARGE - LAGER, GLARE, REGAL
   PRIEST - SPRITE, RIPEST, STRIPE
   DIAPERS - DESPAIR, ASPIRED, PRAISED
3. THIN GLOOM
4. BENEATH CHOPIN
5. NAME FOR SHIP
6. NO CITY DUST HERE
7. ELEGANT MAN
8. UNITED
9. TOPS
10. OPERA
11. THIRTEEN
12. MORSE CODE
13. JACK
14. MIKE
15. HOMER
16. SUE
17. DOT
18. DAWN
19. TOM
20. BILL

POSITIVELY PUZZLING KEY

1. Baltimore, Maryland
2. Richmond, Virginia
3. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
4. Albany, New York
5. Providence, Rhode Island
6. Boston, Massachusetts

CHANGELINGS

1. wish, fish, fist, gist, gift
2. slope, scope, score, spore, sport
3. pace, pare, pore, pork, work
4. help, held, herd, hard, hand
5. gain, lain, laid, lard, yard
6. bowl, bawl, ball, bale, gale, game
7. vans, vane, mane, male, mole, move
8. help, held, hold, hood, hoot, host
9. jobs, fobs, fibs, firs, fire, hire
10. cozy, copy, cops, coos, cook, rook, room

CONFERENCE

Continued from 25

sonable, and the need for additional insurance forced the conference committees to re-evaluate what CAG could do for students.

A few years passed with no student conference activities and each year conference attendees and CAG's State Parent Council members questioned conference committees about what could be done for students. Research presented in *The Gifted Kids Survival Guide*, a series of books for kids under 10 and also for ages 11–18 by Delisle & Galbraith, stated over and over that students surveyed said "No one explains what gifted is all about—it's kept a big secret" and "we feel different." The question was raised "With all of the experts in gifted education gathered together for three days at a CAG conference, can't a program be offered to help students learn more about themselves and their potential?" This challenge prompted members of the CAG Parent Council to look at offering a different and more tailor-made student experience.

The theme of the Oakland 1995 conference "Opening the World to Gifted Students" demanded that events be planned to help students answer the questions they were asking according to the research. A one-day seminar was held with three workshops to help students learn more about themselves physically by studying brain and DNA research. The seminar concluded by identifying secrets of success through the use of learning styles. Positive and lengthy comments came from students' written evaluations.

Students also asked for more time to have in-depth discussions. So the second seminar, held at the 1996 conference in Los Angeles, offered only a choice of two topics, Intensities (Sharon Lind, instructor) or Study Skills (Fran Martine/Deanne Quinn, instructors). Students' comments were once again positive.

This year's student seminar in Sacramento offered a full-day program for students. The morning began by combining the students (grades six and up) with parent conference attendees for a special keynote by Dr. Sally Reis, "How To Develop Your Gifts and Talents." Students then experienced a "Juggling for Success" get-acquainted session and lunch followed by their choice of two of the six workshops offered.* Students were offered a variety of experiences including college preparation, going to college early, and spontaneous problem solving. Specially designed evaluation forms completed by student attendees will be analyzed and help future conference committees mold the student seminar to answer questions that gifted students of all ages are asking. Getting to know oneself and knowing what it is that both parents and educators are trying to provide is one of the most beneficial services that CAG can provide to students. ■

SHARON FREITAS is president of the CAG Parent Council. She has been very involved in CAG's student conferences for many years.

Test Identifies Students in Creativity

BY JOHN KAUFFMAN

Most educators agree that creativity should be nurtured and cherished, but few districts have a systematic standard plan for the identification of creatively gifted individuals.

However, a tool has been developed Dr. E. Paul Torrance, world-renowned author, researcher, teacher, and mentor. Dr. Torrance wrote *Thinking Creatively with Pictures*, also known as *The Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking-Figural Edition (TTCT)* which assesses creativity in five major areas and 13 creative strengths.

Some California school districts using the TTCT are Kern High School District, The Nueva School in Hillsborough, Guerneville, Del Norte County Schools, Konocti Unified School District, Chino Unified School District, and Los Angeles Unified School District.

The TTCT assesses creativity through student-generated responses in three different activities. Not only does TTCT enable districts to systematically assess all students for identification in the area of creativity, it is especially effective as a standardized tool to identify typically underrepresented and underserved populations. Students who do not typically perform well on standardized multiple-choice tests due to the lack of relevance of their experiences to what is asked perform well on the TTCT since they can construct responses on the basis of their personal experience, not those of a test developer. The open-ended, student-generated responses earn them high scores for atypical answers.

The three activities of the TTCT invite examinees to construct pictures, complete pictures, and create different pictures from the same stimuli. The same consumable booklet is used for assessing individuals from kindergarten to late adulthood, although the score conversions are different by grade and age categories. This instrument has enabled researchers to determine effects of programs on creativity and to conduct both short- and long-term research studies of creativity, its nurture, and growth.

Creativity as defined in *Thinking Creatively with Pictures* is determined through standardized scoring of the pictures and their titles. The creative characteristics and their rationale have evolved through Dr. Torrance's research. The current streamlined scoring criteria have been used since 1983. The five major areas that are scored and assigned standard scores and national percentiles are originality, fluency, abstractness of titles, elaboration, and resistance to premature closure.

The 13 different creativity strengths scored contribute to the Creativity Index and are characteristics found to be highly predictive of future creative behaviors: emotional expressiveness; storytelling articulateness; expressing or showing movement or action; expressiveness of titles; synthesis of incomplete figures; synthesis of lines or circles; unusual visualization (seen from the top, bottom, or side rather than a conventional view); internal visualization; extending or breaking boundaries; expressing humor; richness of imagery; colorfulness of imagery; and fantasy.

The five major areas evaluated in the TTCT are originality, fluency, elaboration, abstractness of titles, and resistance to premature closure.

Originality is utilized based on the belief that creative individuals see the same objects as others but are able to put them together in different ways, describe them in different ways, and construct different objectives from the same stimuli. These responses occur infrequently.

Fluency is based upon the premise that creative people develop many uses or figures for the same object and can produce many ideas from the same or different objects, much more so than those who simply see a single use for an object.

Elaboration is a characteristic that creative people have to describe in great detail their ideas. Their pictures stimulate the senses. The audience can see, smell, feel, hear, and taste what they have constructed.

Abstractness of titles illustrates puniness, use of words and pictures to incorporate more into the picture as in political cartoons, such as Gary Larson's *Far Side*, and other scenes where both the picture and the caption are necessary for full understanding and impact. The basis title is a label such as a "Dog," while different levels of titles for the same picture of a dog may be "My Favorite Dog," "My Best Friend," or at the highest level, "My Sister's Eyes," where both the picture and the title must be viewed together in order to understand the full meaning.

Resistance to premature closure is the concept that creative people are open to new ideas and remain thoughtful in problem solving until the best solution is determined rather than simply taking the first idea that comes to mind. They study and analyze their choices before decisions are made.

Research conducted over the years shows that students with high creativity scores are more likely to outperform their high ability peers, and they are more likely to produce creative achievements in life such as entrepre-

See CREATIVITY, 47

Identifying At-Risk Students and the Torrance Test of Creativity

Ten Schools Program Promotes Excellence

BY ANGEL BARRETT

The Ten Schools Program (TSP) of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) began in 1987. The research-based program was designed to restructure and improve the academic achievement of students in the 10 lowest achieving elementary schools with a predominantly African-American students population. All schools are located in central Los Angeles.

The 10 schools are: Charles W. Barrett (formerly 97th St.), Birdielee V. Bright (formerly 36th St.), Compton, Lovelia P. Flournoy, Martin L. King, Jr., McKinley Ave., 96th St., 93rd St., 102nd St., and 112th St.

The mission of the Ten Schools Program is to provide an instructional program and an organizational design that is language intensive and will reverse the pattern of poor academic achievement of African-American and other students in Predominantly Hispanic, Black, Asian and Other Non-Anglo (PHBAO) schools. This mission will be accomplished through ongoing coordinated relevant staff development including 20 days of paid staff development for each teacher supported by a home/school partnership.

The Ten Schools Program is supported through desegregation funds. All integration programs, including the 132 magnet programs and Permits with Transportation, are based upon court order to address the five harms of racial isolation:

- Low academic achievement,
- Low self-esteem,
- Lack of access to post-secondary opportunities,
- Interracial hostility and intolerance,
- Overcrowded conditions.

The LAUSD is divided into 27 clusters. The Ten Schools Program is considered a separate component instructionally and organizationally. Dr. Theodore T. Alexander, Jr., assistant superintendent, office of student integration services, is the administrator in charge of the Ten Schools Program. Francis Haywood is the Ten Schools Program coordinator.

Identification as Gifted

The LAUSD identifies students as gifted/talented in all of the seven categories recognized by the State of California according to AB1040 (1980). These categories are: intellectual, high achievement, specific academic ability, creativity, leadership, visual arts, and performing arts. In the Ten Schools Program, emphasis is placed on the intellectual, high achievement, and creativity categories.

As of October 4, 1996, LAUSD had a total of 42,356 students who were identified gifted; this number represents 6.34% of the District's enrollment.

The ethnic breakdown of identified gifted students in LAUSD is as follows:

Unknown	14	
American Indian	107	(2.5%)
Asian	6,168	(19.6%)
Black	4,284	(10.1%)
Hispanic	18,261	(43.1%)
Filipino	1,571	(3.7%)
Pacific Islander	68	(0.16%)
White	11,883	(28.1%)

(Gifted/Talented Programs Office, Los Angeles, 10/96)

Alexander places the highest priority on meeting the needs of all students including the gifted/talented. As a result, the Ten Schools Program has become a testing ground for many innovative practices.

Intellectual

Students are tested by a psychologist on either an individual intelligence test (Binet, Wisc- R or Leiter) or in a small group on the Raven's.

As part of the Ten Schools Program, each school has a psychologist assigned for 2.5 days per week. In addition to time that the District allots, many schools have chosen to purchase psychologist time out of categorical or integration funding to allow the psychologist to service students for the full five days a week.

In addition to testing students for identification as gifted, the psychologists test students for special education eligibility, counsel students, participate in Student Study Teams and Guidance Committees, serve on Crisis Teams in the event of violence or death and focus on intervention and prevention.

Commitment and persistence by the schools to the gifted program have shown results. Frustrated by Bright Elementary's lack of identification, staff made identification of students in the intellectual category a priority for the 1995-96 school year. In the 1994-95 school year, Bright Elementary had identified no students in this category. "We were bound and determined to identify more students," Marian Aberle, gifted program coordinator noted. "I did the paperwork, tracked down the information, and pulled it all together. It was difficult because, in addition to being a

regular classroom teacher, I also have tutoring on Mondays and Wednesdays. Because it was a priority, I researched additional documentation on referred students after school, on recess, and on lunch breaks." In 1995-96, Bright Elementary identified 23 students as gifted in the intellectual category. The entire school is determined to repeat their success. "Because we lose about 10 students when the fifth grade matriculates, our numbers go down again. We'd like to see at least 2% of the student population identified every year."

High Achievement

In the LAUSD students in the third grade and above may be identified in the area of high achievement based upon a combination of two years of grade points and the results of an achievement test such as the CTBS or Aprenda or on a combination of stanines and national percentile on an achievement test.

Instead of grades in first, second, and third grade, student progress is reported by indicating if the area is a strength (S), if the student is showing growth (G), or if the student needs to improve (N). Students need to have a total of 24 indicators marked strength (S) from the first and second grade report cards in order to qualify. However, since teachers mark only the areas taught during a particular grading period, many students were eliminated because the teacher did not mark enough indicators.

During the 1995-96 school year, 16 students at four schools were identified in the area of high achievement. In 1994-95 only King Elementary identified 14 students in the area of high achievement.

Beginning in the 1996-97 school year, schools in the TSP will begin calculating percentages of indicators in an effort to recognize more students who should qualify academically but could not because not enough areas were marked on the students' report cards.

Creativity

The Creativity Pilot Project began during the 1993-94 school year. Using the Torrance Test of Creativity, students scoring at the national percentile of 80 or above are identified gifted.

The goals of the Creativity Pilot Project are to develop a cost-effective program to identify students in the area of creativity and to design an instructional program that facilitates the growth of fluency (brainstorming), flexibility (adapts, draws from many resources), originality, and elaboration in all students.

Creativity Pilot Project 1993-94

During the 1993-94 school year, 8 of the 10 schools in the TSP participated with other select other schools in the Creativity Pilot Project.

Gifted/Talented Programs provided the following services to schools participating the Creativity Pilot Project for the 1993-94 school year.

- Torrance Test of Creativity Figural A and Verbal A (pretests) and B (posttests) for an average of two third grade classrooms per school;
- Substitute days to release the teachers to attend a scoring session for the pretest in October 1993;
- A stipend of $400 per participating school to purchase supplemental classroom materials related to the Creativity Pilot Project. The stipend for the Creativity Pilot Project was separate from and in addition to the local school budget for Gifted/Talented Program. The stipend was designated for use only by those teachers in the Creativity Pilot Program.

Classroom teachers administered and scored the pretest (Figural A and Verbal A) in the fall. Students who scored 80% or better on either test were identified gifted in the category of creativity and were included in the schools' annual gifted proposals submitted in October 1993.

Schools were sent the post-test (Figural and Verbal B) in the spring of 1994. No substitute days were provided for scoring the test. If schools wished to buy a substitute day, they could use part of the $400 provided to each school site for instructional materials.

In July 1994, the adviser who had been in charge of the program decided to return to the classroom.

In January 1995, an analysis of the operational organization of the Creativity Pilot Project revealed the following concerns:

- The majority of the posttests from the spring of 1994 either were not returned or were returned unscored. After speaking with some of the school site pilot coordinators, it was determined that the classroom teachers did not have time to score the test and that the stipend money had already been spent on materials, therefore, there was not money to pay for substitutes.
- While the average participation was two teachers per school, the variance overall was from one to five teachers per school. All schools received the same $400 stipend. Therefore, some teachers had $400 for instructional materials and others had $80.
- Many teachers expressed frustration because not only did they have questions regarding the project, but also they felt they couldn't teach creativity. Based upon this perception, project coordinators saw the need to define the focus of the project and provide staff development across the curriculum.
- By the classroom teacher administering the verbal test to either the whole class or in groups, students were required

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to write their answers. The question arose as to whether this method was truly measuring a student's verbal creativity. Furthermore, concern was raised that students may be intimidated and/or lack the writing fluency to perform well on the test.

- A total of approximately 2,160 verbal tests had been administered during the fall 1993, spring 1994 and fall 1994 testing. Only 11 students at one school site (96th St.) had been identified using the verbal test.
- Since by definition the verbal test is language dependent, two concerns were raised: (1) What about students who are creative but do not have sufficient language development to express their ability? and (2) Does the verbal test exclude or inhibit students who are unable to have the test administered in their primary languages?
- Some schools were unresponsive. There was no response to either telephone calls or written correspondence. No teachers attended the scoring session and no posttests were returned.

There was a large turnover when teachers changed schools or grade levels.

Table 1. 1993-94 IDENTIFICATION STATISTICS

School	Identified Gifted (All Categories) 10/93****	Newly Identified Creativity* 9/93-6/94
Barrett	15	0
Bright	16	1
Compton	13	N/A
Flournoy (and Flournoy Math/Science Magnet)	25 Magnet 5	0
King	14	2
McKinley	13	8
93rd St.	10	N/A
96th St.	62	21
102nd St.	6	2
112th St.	20	0

*Newly identified creativity based upon figures provided by Alice Haywood, former adviser, Gifted/Talented Programs.

****Identified gifted (total) from the school data sheet, gifted proposal, fall 1993.

Table 2 1994-95 IDENTIFICATION STATISTICS

School	Identified Gifted**** (All Categories) 10/94	Newly Identified Creativity* 9/94-6/95	Newly Identified Intellectual** 9/94-6/95	Newly Identified High Achievment*** 9/94-6/95
Barrett	23	0	0	0
Bright	16	0	0	0
Compton	0	N/A	0	0
Flournoy	29	0	0	0
King	32	0	9	14
McKinley	13	7	1	2
93rd St.	9	N/A	1	0
96th St.	54	23	0	0
102nd St.	20	0	0	0
112th St.	16	18	0	0

*Newly identified creativity from figures supplied by Angel Barrett, adviser, Office of Student Integeration Services.

**Newly identified intellectual from figures supplied by Marcella Trammell, senior psychologist, Gifted/Talented Programs.

***Newly identified high achievement from figures supplied by Marcella Trammell, senior psychologist, Gifted/Talented Programs.

****Identified gifted (total) from the school data sheet, gifted proposal, fall 1994.

Note: Newly identified categories reflect the number of students identified throughout the entire school year. Total identified gifted are from the school data sheets, submitted in the fall of each school year. Therefore, the total number of newly identified may be greater than the total number of identified gifted students.

Revising the Creativity Pilot Project for the 1995-96 School Year

After careful review of accumulated data and concerns, the following changes were recommended for the 1995-96 school year.

- The list of participating schools be reviewed. Only schools where both the principal and the classroom teachers were committed to the Creativity Pilot Project would continue participating for the 1995-96 school year.
- The Creativity Pilot Project be expanded to include additional schools such as Barton Hill and 92nd St. where staff had heard about the Project and had called to express an interest in participating.
- In addition to paying for substitute days in October, Gifted/Talented Programs would also pay for a substitute day to release teachers to attend a scoring session for the posttests in late May or early June 1996.
- Instead of offering each school site a $400 stipend, Gifted/Talented Programs would provide each participating teacher with a stipend of $100 to purchase supplemental classroom materials.
- Gifted/Talented Programs would offer a Creativity Conference at Wonderland Elementary in March 1995. All schools new to the Creativity Pilot Program would be required to participate in the conference. All continuing schools would be welcome to participate.
- The Creativity Conference would have an opening session that defined the Creativity Pilot Project, provided an overview of both the Torrance Test of Creativity and the characteristics of creativity, and delineate the operational schedule of the Pilot for the 1995-96 school year.
- The Creativity Conference would also feature two sessions of instructional workshops. Classroom teachers were asked to share their expertise in kinesthetic movement, music, science, social studies, and language arts. Each instructor presented the same workshops in each session. Therefore, participants could attend two of the four possibilities. Each presenter was briefed on the Creativity Pilot Project beforehand and helped to identify each of the four characteristics in their presentation.
- The philosophy of the Creativity Pilot Project is that creativity is a way of teaching not necessarily another subject to teach. The goal is to teach all subject matter in a way that promotes student development of fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration.
- The verbal test be dropped from the Pilot. In order for the test to be truly verbal, administration needed to be one-on-one using either student dictation or a tape recorder. This process would inhibit one of the primary objectives of the Creativity Pilot

Table 3. 1995-96 IDENTIFICATION STATISTICS

School	Identified Gifted**** (All Categories) 10/95	Newly Identified Creativity* 9/95-6/96	Newly Identified Intellectual** 9/95-6/96	Newly Identified High Achievment*** 9/95-6/96
Barrett	31	5	17	0
Bright	13	0	23	0
Compton	15	N/A	5	1
Flournoy	33	0	7	1
King	22	0	5	0
McKinley	17	21	2	6
93rd St.	12	N/A	11	8
96th St.	60	27	9	0
102nd St.	30	0	16	0
112th St.	51	37	0	0

*Newly identified creativity from figures supplied by Angel Barrett, adviser, Office of Student Integeration Services

**Newly identified intellectual from figures supplied by Marcella Trammell, senior psychologist, Gifted/Talented Programs

***Newly identified high achievement from figures supplied by Marcella Trammell, senior psychologist, Gifted/Talented Programs

****Identified gifted (total) from the school data sheet, gifted proposal, fall 1995

Note: Newly identified categories reflect the number of students identified throughout the entire school year. Total identified gifted are from the school data sheets, submitted in the fall of each school year. Therefore, the total number of newly identified may be greater than the total number of identified gifted students.

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Project which is to develop a cost effective program to identify students in the area of creativity. One-on-one administration would not only reduce the number of students tested but also increase costs by requiring additional staff time. Furthermore, concern was raised as to how many teachers would elect to be part of the Project if such a time-consuming process was used. Finally, since only one school site had identified 11 students out of 2,160 tests, the decision was made to commit to the Figural which is non-language dependent.

- Although the Pilot started in the third grade, enthusiastic teachers should be able to continue in the Project if they were still at the same school site and in grades 2 through grade 5.

On the Horizon

After analyzing available data and speaking with several school site personnel, the emphasis for the 1996-97 school year will be on curriculum development. Lesson plans such as the examples reprinted in the *Communicator* help teachers to not only introduce the characteristics but also to utilize fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration in creating lesson plans.

Table 4. 1995-96 ETHNIC SURVEY REPORT, Fall 1995

School	American Indian	Asian	Black not Hispanic	Filipino	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	White not Hispanic
Barrett	0%	0%	48.7%	0%	51.3%	0%	0%
Bright	0%	.3%	41.4%	0%	58.2%	.1%	0%
Compton	0%	0%	49.6%	0%	50.4%	0%	0%
Flournoy	.1%	0%	52.7%	0%	47.1%	0%	0%
King	0%	.9%	45.3%	0%	53.4%	0%	.4%
McKinley	0%	0%	31.8%	1%	68.0%	0%	0%
93rd St.	.1%	0%	38.6%	0%	61.2%	.1%	0%
96th St.	0%	0%	42.4%	0%	57.6%	0%	0%
102nd St.	0%	0%	53.9%	0%	46.1%	0%	0%
112th St.	0%	0%	52.2%	0%	47.8%	0%	0%

Ethnic Survey Report, Information Technology Division, LAUSD, Publication Number 25

Table 5. ETHNIC BREAKDOWN OF IDENTIFIED GIFTED STUDENTS, OCTOBER 16, 1996
(Percentages of total number identified gifted students.)

School	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Barrett	N/A	33.0%	67.0%	N/A
Bright	N/A	38.7%	61.3%	N/A
Compton	N/A	48.0%	52.0%	N/A
Flournoy	N/A	45.5%	54.5%	N/A
King	5.9%	17.6%	76.5%	N/A
McKinley	N/A	36.4%	63.6%	N/A
93rd St.	N/A	54.0%	46.0%	N/A
96th St.	N/A	49.1%	50.9%	N/A
102nd St.	N/A	44.0%	56.0%	N/A
112th St.	N/A	59.0%	41.0%	N/A

School Rosters, Information Technology Division

The focus is on the entire school program. Although the Creativity Pilot Project was started for third grade students, kindergarten through second grade teachers are preparing students who will be pretested in the fall of third grade. Fourth and fifth grade teachers will be receiving students who have been identified in the category of creativity.

ANGEL BARRETT is the gifted program adviser for the Ten Schools Program and has coordinated the Creativity Pilot Project since July 1994.

BY ANGEL BARRETT

Most of the time, teachers will introduce the elements of creativity (fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration) into their curriculum. However, sometimes, teachers will want to focus on the elements in order to familiarize students with them. "Key-ing Students in on the Elements of Creativity" is designed to teach the elements of creativity. "Word Attack" is a primary skill designed to use the elements of creativity to teach word attack skills and promote vocabulary development.

Key-ing Students in on the Elements of Creativity

Materials:
Many sizes and types of keys

FLUENCY

Brainstorm items that have keys and/or reasons that objects have keys.

Examples:

Items that have keys

diary	lockers
padlock	car
house	businesses
gate	map
car club	trunk
suitcase	door
safety deposit box	key lime pie
toothpaste tubes	key to the city
key to my heart	Phi Beta Kappa
club (car)	hope chest
jewelry box	key ring
motorcycle	Florida
test	plant manager
piano	grandfather's clock (to wind)
monkey	
sardine can	can opener (chuck key)
drill (chuck key)	luggage
turkey	

Reasons that objects have keys

protection	privacy
keep others out	

FLEXIBILITY

Keys as abstract concepts. Explain the following expressions:

Keys to success...
Unlock the mystery...
Key to the puzzle...
Key information...
Keynote speaker...
Key to the city...
Key to my heart...

Sort list according to classification. (vehicles, structures, appliances etc.) Now add to the list. (Often, sorting according to classification helps students to think of other objects in that group or related to that group.)

ORIGINALITY

Have students read one item from their list. Ask the class "Who else listed?" Write the total number of students next to the item. Have students check off items on their lists as someone reads them.

How many people thought of each item? Most people will think of the ordinary objects such as car or house. Few will think of the more original responses such as a diary or a safety deposit box. The more a response is mentioned the less original it is.

Observations:
It is interesting to note variations in groups and the thinking process. For example, when doing this exercise with adults, someone always mentions diary. When doing this exercise with students, I have never had anyone say diary. A workshop participant once noted that doors, cars and trunks do not have keys. They have keyholes.

ELABORATION

While cleaning on day, you find a key. Elaborate on the story by providing detailed information.

Conditions:

- Where did you find the key?
- What were you doing when you found the key?
- How did you feel?
- What were you thinking?
- What did you do?

Kinds:
- What kind of key was it?
- What did it look like?

Purpose
- What does the key fit?
- How do you know?

Function
- Why was there a key?
  For example, the key belongs to your mother's diary. She wrote her innermost secrets in her diary daily and needed to protect her thoughts from her younger brothers.

Supportive evidence
- How do you know?

Past, present and future
- How did the key come to be where you found it?
  For example, when she went off to college, your mother packed her diary in a box with her personal things and stored it in your grandmother's attic.
- What will happen now?
  For example, after finding the diary, you curl up in a chair and read about...

Word Attack *Inductive reasoning and creativity*

Objective:
Students will identify a group of words beginning with the letter "B." (Word Attack from CTBS and Aprenda Planning Guides*)
**This teaching model utilizing inductive reasoning and creativity can be used to teach many decoding skills including compound words, prefixes, etc.*

Materials:
The lesson begins with using inductive reasoning to deduce an answer, allowing students to brainstorm many possible answers (fluency). After allowing students to brainstorm many possible answers, select pictures which will eliminate some of the possibilities and help students use deductive reasoning to determine that the "YES" group are pictures of objects that all begin with the letter "B."

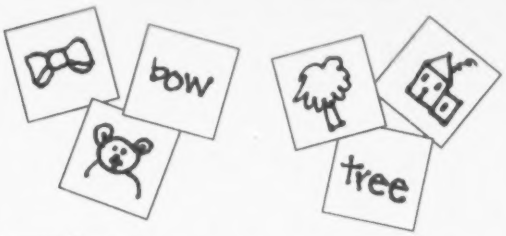
Teacher Preparation:
Compile a list of words that have the phonetic principles that need to be taught or reviewed.

For the consonant "b," the following list was compiled by skimming *Webster's Dictionary*. The list is as extensive as possible because in the days after the initial phonics lesson, the same word bank can be used to reinforce the phonics while emphasizing vocabulary, homonyms, synonyms, sentence structure (nouns and verbs), compound words, and sorting for flexibility (all the foods, all the animals etc.).

baboon	bat	baby	bald eagle	beagle	bank
basenji	barnacle	bear	barbershop	barracuda	bee
bull	beetle	bass	beluga	buffalo	basset hound
bighorn	bigfoot	boxer	bush	bird	bison
bus	bow	bowl	branch	burst	bicycle
burp	bump	barrel	bean	banana	butter
butterfly	beach	barn	beard	bagel	beautiful
barn owl	button	basket	bed	beef	bacon
bell	birthday	backpack	band-aid	bath	ball
barbeque	bench	balance	base	berry	boom
bark	basic	between	ballpark	baseball	battery
beat	boy	black	battle	blank	bill
boxer	blue	block	blow	brain	brown
blood	book	bite	buck	boots	boot
buzz	bury	boat			

INTRODUCTION

Teacher preparation:
Prepare a series of easy-to-identify picture cards of about 10 things that begin with the letter "b" such as bat, bear, bee, ball, bus, bird, bow, banana, bell, butterfly, book. On a separate set of cards, write the name of each item with the first letter (the consonant "b") of each item a different color. Repeat the



process for 10 items that do not begin with the letter "b" such as apple, snake, mouse, spoon, house, tree, pencil, car, cat, and airplane. On a separate set of cards, write the name of each item with the first letter of each item a different color. Notice I chose items that were not difficult to draw. If you still don't wish to draw, good options are clip art, coloring books or magazines.

Note: Be sure that item is clear what you want to demonstrate. For example, I did not use 'bunny' because many students might think of the object as a 'rabbit.'

Before the lesson, designate two areas "YES" and "NO." These areas may be two drawn circles on the chalkboard or two different pieces of construction paper for a more permanent display that can become the center of a bulletin board. The advantage of a

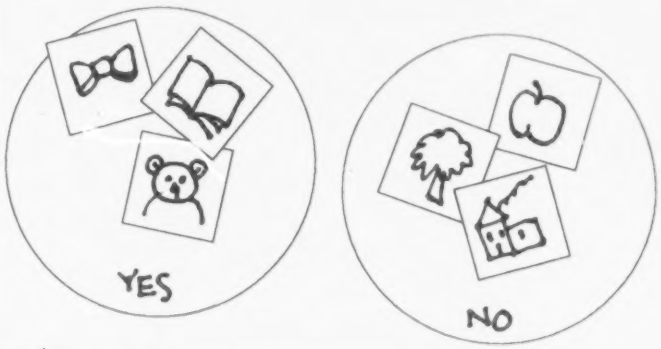
bulletin board is that as students identify more words that begin with the letter "b," they can add their own pictures. Cut small (4" x 4") and it can become an assignment. For example, for a homework assignment, students can identify something in their house that begins with the letter "b" and draw it (baby, bathtub, bathroom, bottle). If you are lucky, someone will draw a family member whose name begins with the letter "b" and a natural opening for capitalization is born.

DIRECTED LESSON

Show all pictures but not word cards on the side of the two areas.

"For today's lesson, I have drawn some pictures. I am going to place each picture on either the yellow construction paper or the pink construction paper. I have a reason for all the yellows and all the pinks, but I am not going to tell you my rule. I want to see what you think."

Begin to place objects. Have students orally identify each object, so that you are sure that they know the name for each object. Repeat the name and emphasize the beginning sound. After about half the cards



have been placed, have the students start guessing whether the object is a "YES" or a "NO." Ask them why the chose the answer that they did. Some may have picked up the reasoning behind the game. Instead of telling them that their answer is right or wrong, suggest that the group try the rule and see if all the objects will fit into the correct category using the new rule.

If at the end of the pictures, no one has guessed the rule, use the word cards. Read the card. "Ball. Ball is in which category?" "Yes." After a few from each category, see if students can identify the rule. The different color marker for the first letter will help it to stand out.

If all else fails, share the rule. Many students are not accustomed to thinking creatively. It will get easier.

FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility is the ability to respond in a variety of categories.

Example: Brainstorm a list of words that begin with the letter "b." Categorize those words. How many categories do you have?

Example: Pretend you are shopping in a big department store. Each student must name something that

in the store begins with the letter "b." Each object must be from a designated category. For example, balls could be categorized as toys. Butterflies and bees insects. Banks, barbershops, and beaches are places. Babies and boys are children. Blue, brown, and black are colors.

Example: Make a list of words that begin with the letter "b." Only one example from each category may be used. This exercise also helps students see the relationship between categories.

Example: An example of an animal could be bald eagle, basset hound, bear, baboon, bass, or butterfly. However, if the students list the categories individually as birds, dogs, apes, fish, and insects, they have five categories, not one. In addition to vocabulary development, students learn strategy and creative ways to categorize which is part of originality.

EXTENSIONS

Sentence Structure

Identify nouns and verbs, put them together for simple structure, elaborate. Write a story around the main idea.

1. To help students understand that verbs are action words, get them moving. Blow! Brush! Box! Bite! (Not each other!) Beat! Balance (on one foot, an object on the scales etc.) Burp! Bump! Bounce! Burst! Great exercise for energized students.

2. Start listing actions words. A wire hanger with a chart paper attached is a quick list which can be moved around the room to accommodate student workers.

3. As you list a word, everyone does the action. Then one child draws a picture on a precut square that will help remind the class of the action. Picture goes next to the written word on the chart.

4. To help students understand that nouns refer to a person, place, or thing, have them try moving. "Who can banana?" "What does it mean to baby?" "If you are boying, what are you doing?" "Who can birthday?"

5. Now give each student a piece of paper and have them fold it to make eight squares.In one square, draw a butterfly. In another, a boy, a book, a banana, a beach, a boat, a bus.

   Note: These is at least one example of a person (boy, baby), place (beach, barbershop or bank) or thing (bus, book, banana, boat, bus).

6. Make a list of nouns and verbs that begin with the letter "b," and let the students draw pictures to place beside the word.

7. Now, start making sentences.
   Bees buzz.
   Boys burp.
   Balloons burst.
   Balls bounce.
   (Grammar note: plurals)

ELABORATION

Start elaborating (adding details) to the sentences.
Describe the noun (adjectives).
Brown bees buzz.
Blue balloons burst.
Small boys burp. (Not all have to be "b" words.)
Black balls bounce.

Tell how the nouns perform the actions. Let children model "how."
Brown bees buzz happily.
Brown bees buzz slowly.
Brown bees buzz merrily.
Brown bees buzz busily.
Busy brown bees buzz happily.

LANGUAGE EXTENSIONS

Sample synonyms:
BEAT - hit
BURST - pop
BEAUTIFUL - lovely, pretty

Sample words that can be a noun or a verb:
bank box bow bark block

Idiomatic expressions:
Busy as a bee
Eats like a bird
Beating around the bush

Try these compound words...
ballpark - a park to play ball
birthday - the day of birth
butterfly - a fly made of butter? a fly that butters? butter that flies?
backpack - a pack worn on the back
barbershop - a shop where barbers work

ANGEL BARRETT is the gifted program adviser for the Ten Schools Program and has coordinated the Creativity Pilot Project since July 1994.

COMPOUND WORDS BY JUDY HALL

The winter issue of the Communicator, *Gifted At-Risk, featured an article by Angel Barrett entitled "The Gifted Student and Achievement: Building a Foundation" which addressed the 'Back-to-Basics' trend and gifted students. The following lesson plan exemplifies one way to teach basic skills such as decoding in a manner consistent with the basics of gifted education.*

CORE LITERATURE TITLE: *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*

CONCEPT: Decoding Skill - Compound Words

OBJECTIVE:

1. Students will identify compound words from the story.
2. Students will create compound word-puzzle cards.

MATERIALS:

Books, index cards, paper strips, crayons, scissors, glue.

TEACHING STRATEGIES:

1. Define compound words as one word formed by two words that each make sense by themselves.
2. Read a story for purpose.
3. Create compound word puzzles.
4. Follow-up learning center activity.

MOTIVATION:

"Today as we re-read the story *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, we are going to look for all the compound words we can find. As we find them, write them down on a piece of paper. "

Upon completion of the story, students brainstorm compound words they have found in the story. The teacher can chart the words on a list.

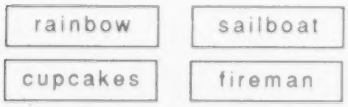
COMPOUND WORDS FROM STORY:

skateboard	anymore	sailboat
undercover	strawberry	crybaby
breakfast	cupcakes	shoestore
carsick	downstairs	railroad

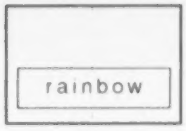
GUIDED LESSON:

1. Show students the index card and tell them to fold the card in half.

2. Ask students to select two compound words from the list and make up two of their own. Write the words on paper strips.

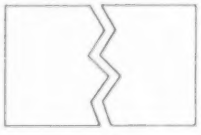


3. Glue the strips onto index cards. Make sure the strips are positioned so that the center fold divides the two words of the compound. Remind students to place strips at the bottom of the card so they will have room to draw a picture.



4. Draw a picture of the compound word and then draw a jagged line through the middle. This is the line that will make your two puzzle pieces become distinct.

5. Cut your card on the jagged line and turn each piece over. Write one word of the compound on each piece. Draw a picture for each word.

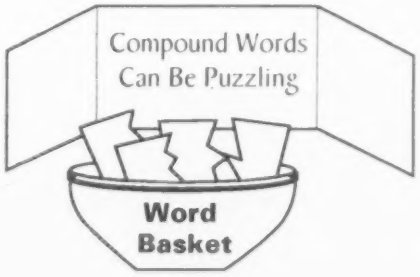


6. Add your puzzle pieces to the basket that will go at the center. The center is available for you to explore and make new compound words. When you go to the center, take your reading log and add all the compound words you make into the log.

INDEPENDENT WORK: Students create puzzle pieces.

FOLLOW-UP:

Place puzzle pieces in a basket at a center titled "Compound Words Can be Puzzling." Students make compound words and can list them in their reading logs.



EVALUATION:

Check students knowledge of compound words by how many they can increase from the original brainstorm list they derived from the story.

JUDY HALL is the coordinator at Canterbury Gifted/High Ability Magnet in the Los Angeles Unified School District. She is also an adjunct faculty member at National University and conducts professional staff development throughout the district.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

STAR TREK

Continued from 1

provide us some good advice for parenting and teaching gifted students. Some of this advice is easy to take—like sugar-coated pills. Some of it will rattle your parental chains.

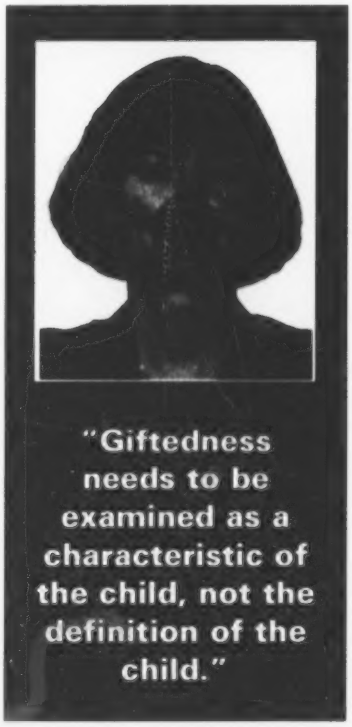
The unknown is not to be feared. It is to be examined, understood, and accepted.

One of the most important findings of our research and that of other researchers is that most gifted students adapt well to their environments and that their social and emotional adjustment is quite normal. That is not to suggest that there won't be some rocky times, as there are for all children and adolescents as they go through various developmental stages. Further, all gifted students are not equally well-adjusted. Some face considerable stress which may result in the development of perfectionism, less healthy coping strategies, or other maladaptive behaviors. However, parents need to step back and recognize the individual needs of their children. Giftedness needs to be examined as a characteristic of the child, not the definition of the child. We find in our research that the children with the fewest adjustment issues are in families where talent is accepted and encouraged, but where it is not glorified or used as an excuse for unacceptable social or emotional behavior.

The more complex the mind, the greater the need for the simplicity of play.

The implications of this adage are twofold. First, gifted children, like all children, need time for intellectual play. Too often, the focus on accomplishment of pre-determined objectives set by schools and parents deprives the child of the opportunity to explore new ideas, to toss around original thoughts or ways of organizing their world experience. Exposing children to books like *Put Your Mother on the Ceiling* provides a beginning outlet for children who have become constricted by the thinking and boundaries drawn by adults.

Second, gifted students also need physical play. It is natural for some gifted students to avoid involvement in physical play, particularly team sports. Why? Largely because they see a dichotomy between their academic accomplishments which are exceptionally high and relatively easy to achieve and their physical accomplishments which may be just average and require considerable investment of effort. We all gravitate toward those things we do well; so do our children. However, physical development is very important and should be encouraged. The longer an individual ignores the physical aspect of development the more difficult it is to accomplish. Further, participation in team activities can serve two useful functions. One, it teaches cooperation in achieving a common goal, and two, it will help the gifted child understand the distribution of talents.



"Giftedness needs to be examined as a characteristic of the child, not the definition of the child."

The idea is to listen to what kids are trying to communicate instead of listening to what they are saying.

One of the characteristics of gifted children is an advanced vocabulary and the ability to express themselves eloquently. However, many gifted children "over-talk" and "over-intellectualize" rather than confront their emotions and feelings. Parents and teachers of gifted students must learn to separate what gifted children say from what they may be meaning. For example, a gifted child may say that "Brent won't talk to me because he doesn't understand what I am trying to say." He may mean, "I am unhappy because Brent won't be my friend."

Watch virtually any episode of Star Trek and the Prime Directive will play a part. But Captain James T. Kirk will play a more important part. Judgment will be exercised. And people will be more important than the rules.

Few of *us* live by the rules all of the time. However, as parents and teachers we often find ourselves imposing rules on children "for their own good." Sometimes these rules are designed to encourage the child to develop full potential but lead to restrictions in the child's life that cause resentment and even contribute to a dislike for the very discipline in which the child has talents. Exercise great caution in setting rules. Involve the child in the decision-making process so that rules are accepted as shared and their goals are understood by the child. Setting high goals and expectations is commendable, but we need to help the child develop in-

dependent means of achieving those goals.

All people or every species, no matter how alien, have the right to live their lives as they wish.

Any parent or teacher of a gifted child begins to develop expectations and aspirations for the child. These range from the simple (graduate from high school) to the complex and nearly unreachable (winning the Nobel Prize in physics). Unfortunately, many parents of gifted children begin to plot and plan the career of their children long before the child has a say in the process or is able to develop his or her own sense of being. One of the most critical variables in achievement and life satisfaction is the pursuit of our individual dreams and desires—not those of others. We need to encourage our children to explore their talents and interests, help them to develop the motivation to succeed in the career of their choice, support their achievements, and help them work through the difficult times.

It is also obvious from the literature on gifted children that the thinking process of gifted children often leads them to assume a moral imperative based on reasoning that puts them in conflict with certain rules of the school, the family, and even the community. While we as parents have a strong need to protect our children from harm, we should also be aware that some gifted children may decide to violate those rules when the strength of moral imperative leads them to an unavoidable position of defiance of the rules. Our role is to help the child make a reasoned decision for his or her age level, be sure the child understands the consequences of the decision, and support the child in the decision even if we may not agree with it. While we always fear for the possible ramifications, we also know that many of the gifted leaders of our time were only able to accomplish what they did by virtue of their strength of character based on moral imperative. Would Ghandi have been the leader he was if he had just followed the rules? Would Martin Luther King be a name we all recognize?

Kirk solves the problems he can solve and delegates the problems that need to be solved by someone else.

Although we found that most gifted children were well-adjusted, there are instances where gifted children are unable to find a social and emotional balance. In those cases it is critical that we find appropriate support systems and interventions to help solve the problems. We often find that adults expect that the extraordinary reasoning ability of gifted children will help them solve social and emotional problems more effectively. This is not necessarily the case. Like all individuals who are unable to solve personal crises, the gifted child should receive professional counseling and intervention when faced with problems that interfere with personal adjustment.

End every episode with a smile.

One of the most striking characteristics of gifted children is their sense of humor. It is a natural complement to the seriousness of learning and the devotion to practice. The seriousness of the gifted child, the advanced reasoning and expectations, and the advanced moral development may put you in conflict with your gifted child. Just remember that ending any conflict episode with an affirmation of love and caring; a comment that illustrates the irony, the humor, or the absurdity of the argument; and a smile that assures the child of your own ability to bury the conflict will give the child the model to do the same.

Finally, we should always remember in dealing with gifted children: *With time and patience you can even learn something from* The Next Generation. ■

CAROLYN M. CALLAHAN, Ph.D. is currently the William Clay Parrish Jr. Professor of Education of the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia and Associate Director of the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. She is currently serving as president of the National Association for Gifted Children. In Sacramento, Dr. Callahan participated in the pre-conference and a "collegial conversation," as well as presenting this Star Trek workshop during the Sunday Parent Conference.

[1] The idea for this article was taken from the book *All I Really Need to Know I Learned from Watching Star Trek* by Dave Marinaccio. Some of the quotes are exact duplications; others have been slightly modified to reflect children.

LOVE

Continued from 1

and I am happy each day that I have been privileged enough to have found work that makes me feel that I can make a difference."

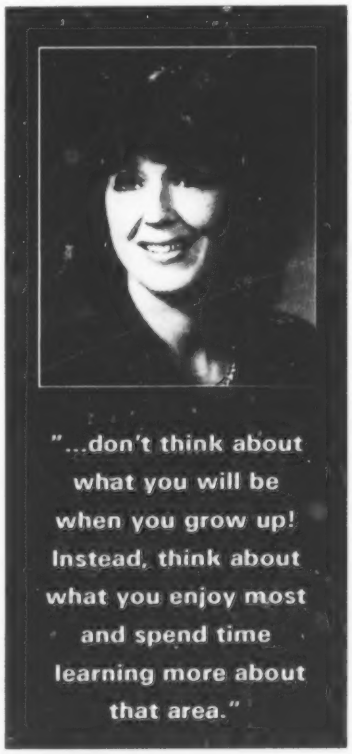
You're smart, talented, young, and the whole world is changing when it comes to work. New careers are being created each month, and some of them involve skills and talents that we only dreamed about a decade ago. Your choice of careers expands with each year you spend in school, and you do have choices. Many of us who grew up in the 1950s did not really understand the choices we had then, and many of us believed that we would have one job or one career in our life. Those of us who were girls were especially wrong in thinking that our choices were limited and that we would only work for part of our adult lives. The reality is that very few of us had the opportunity to be able to take time off to raise our families and some of us didn't want to be forced to make that choice. That

is, once we started working and found work that we loved, the last thing that we ever considered was giving up our work. The difference between having a job and finding work that you love is enormous. It is the difference between not wanting to get out of bed in the morning and being anxious to find time to work on something that fascinates you. It is the difference between putting in hours for a paycheck and being surprised that you can actually get paid to do something you love. When you find work that you love, everything in your day is happier. You always know that there is a special place for you, and you always know that you will have one part of your life that is enjoyable.

Sara's anger with me hardly surprised me because she's in middle school and, as most of you know, lots of kids in middle school get angry with their moms, either occasionally or all of the time. But our conversation did leave me to think about a number of things that I realized that I hadn't talked to her about, such as my pleasure in my work, my beliefs about the way people can find their life's work, the joy that I find in the accomplishment I realize from my work, and why some people don't like their work at all.

There are five points that I want Sara, and you, to think about. First, there are many connections between love and work. People who love their work are happier people. As part of my research at the University of Connecticut, I have conducted several studies about talented individuals, especially women. I have found that the happiest women I have studied were those who worked and who had persons they love in their life. When I compared the women who worked to those who did not work outside of their home, those who worked were happier. One study involved older women who had achieved eminence in their work after the age of 55. These American female pioneers were often the first in their fields—the first female forester in the country, the first female Broadway producer in the United States. What they had in common is that they believed in themselves, that they believed their work made a difference in our world, and that they found joy and love in their accomplishments.

When you are fortunate enough to find work that you love, you don't think of it as work. I began my teaching career in 1972 in a junior high school outside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I taught six classes of reading to eighth graders each day and coached the girls' swim team, which had its practice from 6 a.m. until 7 a.m. I often left home in the morning at 5 a.m. and got home at 6 or 7 p.m. Every weeknight and many, if not most, weekends were spent correcting papers. I was busier than I had ever been in my life and was always surprised when I got my paycheck every two weeks because I was actually getting paid to do something that was so much fun. Fun? Absolutely, because I loved my students and I loved my work. I loved the challenge of trying to get resistant 13-year-olds to read. I loved having plays in my classroom and watching my students actually start to understand Shakespeare. I loved having their creative writing improve and knowing that I had helped. So find work that you love.



"...don't think about what you will be when you grow up! Instead, think about what you enjoy most and spend time learning more about that area."

Second, don't think about what you will be when you grow up! Instead, think about what you enjoy most and spend time learning more about that area. If you could write a book, what would the subject be? If you had an hour or two of spare time, what would you choose to do? What kinds of activities do you like? If you could choose what you would learn about in school, what would you select? Why? These questions and others will help you think about what your life's work might be. What are your talents? Do you like to do things by yourself? With others?

My colleague and husband, Joseph Renzulli, defines giftedness as the interaction between above-average ability, creativity, and task commitment, three clusters which are brought to bear upon an area of interest. An individual's above-average ability, task commitment, and creativity have to emerge and be applied in the same area. That is, you can't display above-average ability in creative writing, creativity in science projects, and task commitment in playing the piano if you want to develop your talents and gifts. You have to find something in which you have above-average abilities and work to develop your creativity and your task commitment in this area. Think about this. If you spent one hour a day for the next four years learning about a particular area, you could develop considerable expertise in that area. Find something you love and delve into it. Go as far and as deep as you can and enjoy the process of learning. Don't

worry about what career you will have in that area because careers are changing rapidly and many careers that we have today will be very different in the next few decades. Think about your interests, your talents, and the things that you like to do, and let that guide your decision-making. Remember, much of giftedness is what you do to develop your own abilities.

Third, know that your work may change over the years that you work, but that all of you will work! According to futurists, unless you are remarkably rich or have severe health problems, almost all of you will work for at least 40 years of your lifetime. If you believe that in the future many women will stay home and take care of their children on a full-time basis for many years, you are probably wrong, unless things change drastically in the next two or three decades. Some of you who have children may want to take care of your children full-time for a few years after they are born and that is fine. In fact, we should all support any person's choice to do whatever he or she believes is right. But what is right for one person is not always right for all people. Many of you will not be able to be at home with your children because you will have to work to support yourself and your family.

So all of you will work, and you will probably have many different positions. Changes in the work force are happening at a faster rate than ever before in our nation's history, and it is clear that we will not stay in the same positions for most of our lives as did many of our parents and our grandparents. Why did I stop being a middle school teacher? Other challenges came into my life, and I believed them to be creative opportunities for me to learn and grow. I took a risk leaving work that I loved, but I grew, developed new talents, and continued to learn. If you work at something you do not like, it is not a lifelong mistake. You can go back to school, and you can make changes and keep learning about what you love.

Fourth, learn how to plan, and spend time planning with your parents and your teachers. Planning is essential. Plan to find the work you love. Don't be afraid to take risks. Find the right college or program to help you learn the various skills you need. Take as many math, computer, and science courses as you can because that will enable you to have more options for your future. Read, read, and read some more. Do your own research about what you love. Do you want to travel? Learn about the hundreds of careers that involve traveling and living in different parts of the world. But realize that you can't plan to find the perfect job when you first begin to work. As you learn more about yourself and your interests and talents, you may change the work that you do several times during your lifetime.

Fifth, think about how you define your own success. A well-known author who lives in our town is a creative writing teacher, Wally Lamb. Wally spent nine years working on his first novel, *She's Come Undone*; it made the *New York Times* Best Seller List and last month, Oprah picked Wally's novel for her monthly book club, guaranteeing him sales of almost one million books in a month. In a recent speech, Wally described life as being largely a matter of perspective. Remembering a high school biology experiment in which it was his job to feed the fruit flies in a glass jar, he explained, "What to a human is merely a rotten banana may be, to a fruit fly, a cruise aboard the Love Boat." He also discussed success, saying,

> "Success isn't measured in limo rides or stock portfolios or book sales or brushes with celebrity and if you think it is, be forewarned: you may end up with the life of a fruit fly, imprisoned in a glass jar and banging hopelessly to get out...Success grows from love and from the joy and the terror and the challenge of worthwhile work. It's the process, not the product. The unglamourous journey, not the flashy arrival."

Most nights when I go to sleep, I know that I am extremely fortunate. I love my husband and my children, and I love my work. Without my work, I know that I would not be as happy as I am. Without people I love and who love me, I also would not be as happy as I am today.

Having a lot of potential can be a real dilemma, and working to be a success is illusory at best. Choose your own road to success by finding what you love to learn about and doing it. I may never be on the *New York Times* Best Seller List or the Oprah show, but I feel that I have achieved success in my life because I love my work. I believe that my daughter better understands now that what I do is necessary for my head, my heart, my sense of self, and for her. A futurist once said that we all have three visions for the future: One that is possible, one that is probable, and one that is preferable. I urge you to find the one that is preferable for you, one that will bring you fulfillment and joy. Continue to look for an area that you love and that you want to pursue in your work. I wish you joy and love in whatever that might be, and a happy future in which you define success in a way that makes you feel fulfilled, challenged, interested, and proud. ■

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UNDERACHIEVERS

Continued from 6

themselves to are older. Adults figure that such comparisons are not a problem because when the 5-year-old gets to be 10, he'll be able to do 25 pushups too. That's probably correct, but for some children the emotional imprint of being "less than" remains and lays the groundwork for developing an underachieving personality.

The anxiety that results from the anticipated failure causes problems later, at least as far as academic performance. Too much anxiety, or anxiety that can't be handled, interferes with thinking. Thinking and feeling are like oil and water—they don't usually mix well. One teenager told me that in the 11th grade he decided to try to do better academically.

"...some students become quite adept at knowing what adults are thinking and feeling. Eventually...they become expert manipulators."

He planned to take precautions to minimize distractions. He closed the door to his room, turned off the radio, closed the blinds, and sat at his desk. He planned to read the chapter assigned in American History, one paragraph at a time, stopping after each, and telling himself in his own words what he'd read. That way, he thought, he would know he was learning. He recalled getting halfway through the first sentence when the thought came into his mind, "I wonder if this will be on the test." Since he'd lost his train of thought, he had to go back to the beginning of the sentence and start again. When he got to the second sentence, he wondered if he'd understood the first sentence correctly and had to begin again. So it went. When he finally finished the paragraph, he'd spent more time then he thought he would and couldn't remember what he'd read. He became frustrated and quit. Anxiety about the upcoming test interfered with his concentration. He felt that he "wasn't as good" as he'd assumed the other students in his class were because he assumed this didn't happen to them.

These doubts and worries that intrude into the continuity of thought interfere with concentration and are sometimes called "auditory processing problems" by educators since the same difficulty seems to arise when the student is given verbal directions. The worry that a student will be perceived as not doing well interferes with using his quite capable mental abilities, and this sometimes baffles teachers. A teacher once described a situation in which she was helping a young man with long division. She stood beside his desk and gave him an example by doing a problem for him on the paper on his desk. She recalled that he'd been nodding his head indicating that he followed what she was doing. When she finished the problem, she asked him to do the next one by himself. She was surprised to find that he didn't have a clue about where to begin—while she had been doing the sample problem, the student had not looked at the paper once; he'd been searching her face for clues of disapproval.

After a few years of searching parents' and teachers' faces for clues, some students become quite adept at knowing what adults are thinking and feeling. Eventually they use this in dealing with anxiety in another way—they become expert manipulators. They make excuses or blame others to avoid getting into trouble. One preteen said that he'd learned that even if he had done something wrong, his mom wouldn't get mad at him in front of his friends. So when he came home late, he always brought one of his friends with him. Another way to deal with anxiety then is to find some way around it. Some underachievers deal with anxiety by not dealing with it; they find excuses not to do their homework or study for their tests. They even get quite good at dodging parental queries.

A father once told me that as he drove his son home from school each day, he would ask his son, "How was school?" His son would say "fine." "Have any tests?" "No." "Do you have any homework?" "I did it in school." That was the end of the conversation, and the father realized that it was the same routine each day. He was shocked when the notice came home from school that his son was severely behind on his homework and had not been prepared for tests. The young man had learned how to read his dad to avoid what he saw as the third degree by answering, "Fine," "No," and "I did it at school." In my office this young man sat watching me to see what questions I would ask so that he could develop a strategy for parrying whatever queries I might throw at him. This was how the young man had come to make his way in the world. He was spending his very capable mental energy devising ways to escape inquiry about what he should have done, rather than just doing it.

How do we intervene to slow the progression of this constellation of personality features that present themselves now as problems in school, but in later years will leave these people ill equipped for adulthood?

There are two places to begin. First, regardless of what the parents have done, they always say they've done it with the child's best interests at heart. They add that what they want most for their children is that they become happy, healthy, well adjusted, in-

dependently functioning adults. Unconsciously, they want to be assured that this will happen when the child is 12. They usually think that the index which best assures that the children are on the way to becoming adults is the grades kids get in school; hence the parents' concern for academic excellence. Given the structure of the underachieving personality style, this attitude by parents actually works counter to what the parents hope. Their concern is seen as pressure which leads to anxiety surrounding whether the children are "measuring up" to these expectations. This leads to anxiety that interferes with their ability to think clearly as described above. So the first hurdle to get over is having parents see that academic performance is just one of many issues in their child's development and that it is seldom the most important.

There are better predictors of what is to come for their children. One is the way they handle, or don't handle, anxiety. Anxiety is a useful source of information for us; it is not to be avoided. If we are in the middle of a railroad crossing and there's a train coming, it's good to feel anxious because that anxiety will transform into motivation to get us off the track. Watching to see if there is a balance between the anxiety and the child's ability to think through the anxiety gives us more useful information about the child than grades.

Another predictor to look for is the child's attitude toward mistakes. Is she sufficiently free from internal turmoil to laugh at herself when she makes an error and then go on to correct it? Underachievers spend a good deal of energy trying to avoid what they anticipate to be the humiliation associated with failure. Usually they do this by not risking, not even trying.

The next point of intervention is with the underachiever himself. The goal here is to correct the inaccurate self-perceptions. Underachievers have come to see themselves as inadequate and as not measuring up. Objective evidence has proven that this isn't so, but merely presenting the child with his impressive IQ scores won't overturn the years of habits in thinking and feeling about perceived inadequacies. Overcoming this is a gradual process and takes time to accomplish. Therapy can help. The therapist gradually comes to understand how these misperceptions operate in the child's life and either looks for or arranges opportunities to use the child's own experience to demonstrate the abilities of which he is unaware. This, together with training parents to do the same thing at home, gradually awakens within the child a sense of himself as being aware of what he wants for himself, as opposed to what well-meaning parents want for him or from him. This leads to the motivation to do whatever is required to achieve those goals.

Over time the child develops a sense of herself as separate from those around her and comes to see herself as capable of identifying what is important in her life, rather than spending her energy finding ways to avoid the expectations of others. The effort is then better used in making plans for achieving what she wants and then putting the plan into action, with the awareness that she will be able to adjust if things don't go exactly as planned. The exhilaration that comes from being more clearly aware of where she is going and from being empowered to get there by her own efforts leads to a sense of self-esteem. ■

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MIGHTY BRIDGE

Pounding on the mighty bridge
The rain, it tried and tried
It pounded every crack and ridge
At last, it left the bridge and died

Every day it came back
To knock it down you see
Came pouring down without lack
And would not let it be!

One day that nasty rain, it learned
A lesson not to forget
A blazing sun came up and burned
All the wetness that it met

So away went winter, up came spring
The might bridge was quite content
It liked to listen to all the bird sing
While staring at skies unbent

Spring was pleasant, warm and nice
The bridge was relaxed and calm
Then came summer with jazz and spice
Including fragrant palms

Sun scorched and burned the bridge stones
Steam rose up like heated vents
The bridge felt hot and all alone
Parched with no relent

But, like all seasons, it came to an end
The bridge welcomed the come of fall
The leaves upon the trees would descend
Like a blanket around a doll

The blanket kept the bridge warm and snug
All throughout the winter
The pounding rain and hurling snow never dug
Into the leaves to make even a splinter

The endless cycle of changing seasons
All over again and again
Such mystery, who knows the reasons?
Some things we can't comprehend

—Vanessa DiCecco
Grade 5, Park Western Place
Harbor Math Science Magnet
Bea Walker, Advisor

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INTERNET

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ment has been a bittersweet thing, enduring years of hype and hope for the potential of electronic education.

Let's Step Back and Look at the Internet

Unfortunately, the Internet is a medium unlike any other. It is almost organic, the way it grows and changes; so it's impossible to capture it in a manual. We cannot teach the Internet as though it were a new kind of textbook. New methods are needed.

Instead of developing and using new ways of teaching this new technology, too many have been caught in what we call the techno-drool trap. They spend more time "ooohing" and "ahhing" over this shiny new toy than figuring out what they can use it for. They are concerned with the tool, and not with how they can use the tool effectively. With little context for its use, planners and implementers have had to make things up as they went along. Doing the best they could with what they knew, educators applied industrial-age strategies to a learning tool that needs information-age methods.

"Occupational futurists say that today's generation of students will experience five to seven careers in their lifetimes."

Despite the enormous financial and emotional commitments made, the educational revolution we've been waiting for has not happened. The technology is there, but education still has not changed. This has created a technology backlash with much second-guessing, drive-by criticism, and retrospective scrutiny. All we are left with is questions about the validity and the purpose of technology as an instructional tool.

Facing Reality

We are making a grave mistake, however, if we believe all this criticism. The blame cannot be placed with technology alone. We don't blame a pencil if a child can't read, write, or do math. In the same way, we cannot blame the technology for its failure to ignite education as it has business. The real problem is in trying to use this new technology the same way we've used traditional resources. We think we can use computers and Internet connections the same way we use libraries and even CD ROMs. The truth is, it just doesn't work the same way. Using this technology requires a different mindset and a new approach because it is moving and changing so fast. The real blame for the lack of spark in the long-awaited educational revolution lies mainly with an overstuffed, undernourished curriculum and the teaching strategies that have been applied to the use of new technology in schools.

Chasing After Relevance and Meaning

We know that learning is based on making connections that relate the new to the familiar—that nothing makes sense unless it has relevance. Creating relevance is not possible without meaning. Students must be taught something they need to know about something that really matters to them. Finding personal meaning in relevant information opens the way to learning.

How do we judge relevance? One key to relevance is timeliness. It's safe to say, however, that timeliness doesn't exist in most of the content areas of the curriculum, since it often takes five to eight years to get a new textbook into the educational pipeline or for an old one to be thoroughly revised. This is one reason why schools that are supposed to be training young people to meet the future are not even able to train them for the present.

The need for relevant content cannot help but lead today's information-conscious educators to more current information resources, including those of the Internet. Everything from traditional to leading-edge information can be found somewhere on-line. However, finding relevant information using the Internet is not always easy. Some have described the Internet as one huge library where all the books have been flung on the floor into one gigantic sedimentary pile. As a result, finding anything on-line can be like searching for a needle in a haystack. Clearly, some very specific skills are needed to deal with the vast information resources that are arranged in no particular order. Before we can fully understand the critical nature of these skills, we must strip away some old misconceptions about the nature of information.

The Bare Naked Truth About Information

New and emerging technologies have changed information in two significant ways. The first is that information has a substantially shorter shelf life—in essence, it has become a perishable product, a disposable commodity. Consider that more new information has been produced within the last three decades than in the last five millennia, that the English language now contains 540,000 words, five times more than in Shakespeare's time, that more than one million books are published every year worldwide, or that a weekly edition of the *New York Times* contains more information than the average person was likely to come across in a lifetime in 17th-century England.

As a consequence and contrary to traditional beliefs, information has developed a fluid and dynamic quality; it changes and evolves continuously. This makes teaching the same information from one year to the next increasingly ineffective. Is

it any wonder that curriculum content is rapidly becoming irrelevant?

Second, the short shelf life of information is directly affecting the amount of education needed to sustain a lifetime of earning a living. Occupational futurists say that today's generation of students will experience five to seven careers in their lifetimes. Not five to seven jobs working for the same company, but five to seven distinct careers. The net result is that this generation can never stop "learning a living." Learning has become a lifelong event.

Compare this situation to that of the agricultural economy, in which learning spanned the ages of 7 to 1; or the industrial economy, in which learning spanned the ages of 5 to 22 years of age, and both were considered enough for a lifetime of work.

To remain relevant and employable in the Information Age, we must constantly be refreshing our store of knowledge and replenishing our stock of information in much the same way that we must continue to buy groceries to nourish ourselves.

The bare fact is that the information economy isn't coming—it's already here! One just can't live by the old rules anymore. One needs to understand and follow the new rules in order to survive. The new requirements of living and working in this age of volatile information are that people become competent handlers and processors of information.

The first step in creating a good learning climate in the information economy is to recognize that giving students obsolete, homogenized, complete, and pre-organized information as we do now in the current curricula does not prepare them for survival in the information age.

Educators are on the front lines in a war they must win for the sake of the next generation and the viability of our nation's economy. The well being of all our children rests on the ability of the education system to rise to the challenge of preparing students for the information age. Fail, and we face the next century with a mass of industrial-age cogs spinning around in the rapidly rusting industrial age economy. People will be left behind, lost. Succeed, and we will have created and fanned the spark that will sustain the passion for lifelong learning in every mind we touch.

Lofty words perhaps, but true. This is nothing less than a vital mission—to help this generation of learners reach critical mass in acquiring information competence. This mission is not impossible. It will be achievable when educators can begin teaching information processing skills, including those that harness the full potential of new technologies like the Internet.

Why is This So Critical?

More than half the work force in North America is already in information-intensive jobs—60% of Americans on the job are now considered to be knowledge workers. Recent studies show that more than 60% of new jobs created over the last 10 years have evolved because of new technologies. While they may not be directly associated with information industries, today's work force must process large amounts of information with new technologies in order to do their jobs. By early in the 21st century, 8 out of 10 jobs will be classified as knowledge-driven. The information age is driving the economy, and it will only gain momentum. People unable to obtain jobs as knowledge workers will become functionally illiterate. They will be both unemployed and unemployable, reduced to the status now occupied by those who can't read or write the printed word. To survive in this economy, people must master the new literacy skills that transcend almost everything that is done. Most critically, they must master information literacy. ■

IAN JUKES is Director of the Thornburg Center for Professional Development.

CREATIVITY

Continued from 29

neurs, teachers, authors, company founders, presidents and chairpersons of PTA, and other organizations.

The concern for identification of creative attributes in underrepresented and underserved populations is to identify individuals who are problem solvers, who look at the same problem in different ways, and who show new uses for objects or solutions for problems. Research and common sense demonstrate that creative individuals exist in the same proportions among diverse populations as in majority populations. Without a creative strand in GATE programs, it may be that the only criteria used for inclusion into the program is how well the students know the books. Educators to assist students in learning how to use information, how to find more information, and how to solve problems differently. Teachers need to reward different or divergent thinking, to appreciate differences, and to learn how to develop students into creative problem solvers, enabling them to pursue and exploit their strengths of different ways of thinking, to create great opportunities for themselves, and to acknowledge that these are valued attributes. ■

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COMMUNICATOR

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ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

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Homeschooling—is it right for you?
Find out more information about this growing alternative.

Private Schools
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Alternative Assessment
Another educational option.

Gymnast Exemplifies Effective Strategies for Gifted Learners
Gold medalist Peter Vidmar is proof that giftedness takes many forms.

Young People's Pullout
More opportunities and options.

So My Child is Gifted—What Now?

BY JOAN FRANKLIN SMUTNY

A fourth-grade child named Shannon came home and slumped down in the couch next to her mother. "Language arts is so boring. I thought we were going to write free verse poetry this year. Instead, we're back to reading, reciting, and writing the rhyme scheme stuff. I'm so

sick of all that." Knowing how Shannon loved writing, her mother replied, "Well, maybe you should ask Mrs. Willard if you could try free verse poetry on your own; we have plenty of books around here." Shannon continued to pout. "No, then all the other kids will think I'm weird."

Does this sound familiar? Hearing comments like these and seeing the love of learning gradually diminish and die out, what parent of a gifted child does not want to rush off to school and find out what can be done? Who in January does not wonder if the last five months could not be more exciting or challenging for a gifted daughter or son? Who does not wonder what a school offers (or can offer) in the way of programs, strategies, or activities for a gifted student?

Common Signs of a Problem

Children express boredom differently depending on the personality of each child and the unique circumstances of the classroom. Common indicators of boredom include:

- verbal expressions of boredom;
- listlessness;
- lack of interest in subjects that used to interest the child;
- anxiety about going to school;
- minimal participation in classroom activities (withdrawal);
- tendency to avoid homework that the child used to do willingly;
- plummeting self-confidence despite ability;
- discrepancies between school and home performance.

Gifted children depend on their

See WHAT NOW?, 45

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www.CAGifted.org

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LETTERS

Letters to the editor may be sent electronically to vckib@aol.com. We want to hear from you and to share your views with others.

More Thanks for the Grant

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for providing me with such a wonderful, inspiring experience. Your scholarship allowed me to be in the Musical Youth Artist Repertory Theatre's production of *Annie*. During the production I improved my singing, dancing and acting skills. I also learned alot about what goes on backstage. The role I got in the play was ensemble. I also got a solo role in the song *Dumb Dog*. It is about Annie's dog, Sandy. Some of the songs I sang and danced to were *Hard Knock Life*, *Dumb Dog*, *Smile* and *N.Y.C.* I learned you have to work hard no matter what part you have. Thank you again.

Danielle Newlin
Grade 6, age 11
Patton Elementary School
Garden Grove, CA

Danielle was a 1996 recipient of a CAG student grant.

Last year your association granted me $500 to study computers. At the time I was in sixth grade at Patton Elementary School in Garden Grove. Now I attend Hilton D. Bell Middle School. I used that money to learn about different aspects of computer operations.

The first class that I attended was a workshop at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa. We learned about the principles of simple machines and their design using Apple II computer and LEGO® DACTA robotics.

I have also attended classes at Simple Solutions in Westminster. The robotics camp here was more advanced. We built a different robotic device each day and learned to write the software to run the various lights, switches, and motors that made the device work through a power pack connected to the computer. I really enjoyed writing the programs and watching the robots work. We also did some calculations to determine the economics of the device if it were used in a real setting.

Once a week I attend a computer explore time where I am learning to use various types of equipment with the computers as well as creating videos, using a voice synthesizer on the Internet, sampling a variety of educational software and improving my DOS, Windows, and word processing skills.

My school does not have computer classes, except for keyboarding classes, but that class uses typewriters. I think I have used this scholarship wisely and effectively.

Steven Rawnsley
Grade 7, age 12
Hilton D. Bell Middle School
Garden Grove, CA

1996 CAG student grant recipient, Steven Rawnsley

CALENDAR

CAG BOARD MEETINGS

SEPTEMBER 12–14, 1997
The Westin Hotel, Los Angeles Airport

NOVEMBER 21–23, 1997
Anaheim Hilton & Towers

JANUARY 9–11, 1998
The Hyatt Regency Hotel, Sacramento

FEBRUARY 26, 1998
Anaheim Hilton & Towers

APRIL 24–26, 1998
The Westin Hotel, Santa Clara

Board Meetings are open to the public. If a meeting is scheduled in your area and you wish to attend, please call the CAG office for specific information.

STATE & NATIONAL CONFERENCES

NOVEMBER 5–9, 1997
44th Annual Convention, National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), "Responding to Today, Planning for Tomorrow." Little Rock, Arkansas. Call 202-785-4268 for registration materials.

FEBRUARY 27–MARCH 1, 1998
36th Annual Conference, California Association for the Gifted (CAG), "Reach for the Stars; Meet the Challenge." The Anaheim Hilton & Towers. Registration materials will be mailed to members in September, 1997.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 27–March 1, 1998

36th Annual CAG Conference

Anaheim Hilton & Towers

The California Association for the Gifted serves its members in many valuable ways:

- Institutes and conferences for educators and families
- Parenting strategies to nurture giftedness
- Advocacy to assure funds for GATE programs
- Publications about differentiated curriculum and contemporary issues affecting gifted students

CAG is a mission-driven, volunteer administered, non-profit association. For membership information, contact the CAG office at 415-965-0653 or visit the CAG home page on the Web www.CAGifted.org.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

MARGARET GOSFIELD

The debate regarding the best type of program to offer gifted students has continued nonstop since the establishment of gifted education. In the early years, pull-out programs were most popular. With the more recent emphasis on heterogeneous grouping, many school districts have moved toward cluster grouping in regular classes as their primary mode of serving gifted students. But the "perfect program" still eludes us.

Indeed, one may argue that there is no perfect program. Each district and even each school, has its own particular student needs, human resources, and social and political ethos. The goal should be to make the best matches possible. In some places that may be a pull-out program; in others it may be self-contained classes or cluster grouping or part-time grouping. And for individual families, it may mean going outside the public schools for home or private schooling.

Furthermore, there are different levels of giftedness; Barbara Clark refers to Gifted, Highly Gifted, and Exceptionally Gifted Learners in her most recent edition of *Growing Up Gifted* (1997). Each more involved group requires a more intensely differentiated learning experience and preferably a different setting or program structure.

Whatever structure is selected, the most important factor is the quality of the learning experience provided to students. Certain components are critical for gifted students, and must be central no matter what the program, among them: differentiation, flexible grouping, continuous progress, intellectual peer interaction, continuity, and teachers with specialized education in meeting the needs of gifted learners. We must not become preoccupied with advocating for a particular program structure while overlooking the critical learning experiences necessary for the well being of gifted students.

CAG will continue to assist decision makers as they assess and develop their programs. Useful information can be found in the pages of this journal and in our other publications, from the speakers at our conferences, parent outreaches, teacher institutes, and the links on our Web page. We encourage you as an active member to participate fully in all of these offerings and to share your perspectives with us as well. ■

CAG TEACHER INSTITUTES

Registration materials for all CAG Teacher Institutes are available by calling the CAG Office at 415-965-0653.

AUGUST 11–15, 1997
Differentiating the Curriculum, CAG Summer School for Adults
San Juan USD, Sacramento County
Hotel rooms available at Sheraton Rancho Cordova Hotel, Rancho Cordova, 916-638-1100

SEPTEMBER 27–28, 1997
Defining Standards for Gifted Students: Teaching Toward a "6"
CAG Teacher Institute
Fresno Doubletree Hotel
Tel: 209-485-9000

OCTOBER 4–5, 1997
Defining Standards for Gifted Students: Teaching Toward a "6"
CAG Teacher Institute
Los Angeles Airport Hilton
Tel: 310-410-4000

OCTOBER 18–19, 1997
Defining Standards for Gifted Students: Teaching Toward a "6"
CAG Teacher Institute
The Westin Hotel, San Francisco Airport
Tel: 415-692-3500

NOVEMBER 15–16, 1997
Defining Standards for Gifted Students: Teaching Toward a "6"
CAG Teacher Institute
Fess Parker's Doubletree Resort, Santa Barbara
Tel: 805-564-4333

DECEMBER 6–7, 1997
Defining Standards for Gifted Students: Teaching Toward a "6"
CAG Teacher Institute
Flamingo Resort Hotel & Fitness Center, Santa Rosa
Tel: 707-545-8530

FROM THE EDITOR

VICKI BORTOLUSSI

Recently , I had a wonderful experience with my daughter on a trip to Washington D.C. Not only was the trip itself an unexpectedly special time for parent and child to have time together, but an epiphany occurred for me, that may have a lasting effect. The experience was so simple, yet so important.

The first day in Washington, we visited with lifetime friends, a mother and daughter, whom we have known for many years and have visited in a variety of locations, always having fun as we virtually grow up together. One day two, we went to the Women's Museum of the Arts and were treated to a first-time showing of American women photographers. The exhibit was exhaustive and was thematically arranged to show how women pushed the envelop of their craft. It was amazing. My daughter, who is passionate about photography, overwhelmingly drank in each photograph as she ever so slowly perused the room.

After this experience, she asked that we only attend one museum a day, but still it should be an art museum. The remainder of her trip, which was part of a national youth press conference, would focus around the traditional political D.C. offerings. Day three found us at the Corcoran Museum where we experienced special showings of the extraordinary and colorful glasswork of Chilhuly (which we had seen in Santa Barbara) and the emotional and powerful sculpture of Neri. We also saw work of well known artists such as Monet, Manet, Degas, O'Keefe, and Van Gogh.

Much of this we have done so often. Yet all of a sudden it hit me like a thunderbolt. What kind of schooling produced these gifted and creative geniuses? As a parent of two children who are gifted in many aspects but who are passionate about the arts, I realized the value of the artists work we were seeing and the value of art in our culture. It was obvious that much of the art was something magic and not necessarily taught. Yet, though many of us appreciate art, we don't always encourage it to the extent that work will be produced at the level of the artists on exhibit. If my children choose to be artists and to explore their talents in this respect to the fullest, what could be more important? Yet today, the emphasis seems to be more on achievement in the classroom in academic areas and pressure to succeed for the gifted college-bound student is more traditional than avant garde. I also wondered what could we do to encourage the artistic and creative talent of our children, especially as far as schooling is concerned.

The trip with my teenage daughter changed my thinking and my appreciation for the role of art in her life. It's not just a matter of exposure but protection of the precious creativity within that must not be boxed, limited, or devalued in any way. It must be nurtured and encouraged to grow as it finds its own way to be expressed. Who knows what may be the result? But if the talent of the great artists we had experienced had not been allowed to be expressed, what a loss it would be! In fact, it could even be tragic. Gifts, whether academic or otherwise, should be treasured as we value the uniqueness of each individual. From creativity not only comes art but often inventions and discoveries and even cures...

So simple. Yet so true. As a parent, one must not fear the future of our children if they love creative expression. The creative expression will not only help them to grow in so many ways but may enable them to give to others. We must give these students opportunities and options.

This issue of the *Communicator* is devoted to the theme of the need for educational options for gifted students.

Beginning with "So My Child is Gifted—What Now?" by Joan Smutny, the issue is devoted to exploration of what divergent possibilities in education exist, with no one option being endorsed or promoted. Also, in the Parent's section, Raenele Côté further illustrates the differentiated perspective by addressing "Off-The-Rack Education: Give me a Perfect Size-10 Student."

Barbara Clark, mentor extraordinaire to us all, is not only interviewed by parent Laurie Buckle, but Clark's position on standards, which is an ever-increasing issue in today's educational climate, further elaborates on ways education, particularly for the gifted, are measured and judged.

Young people in Linda Brug's section add their point of view, especially in articles about some different ways that gifted teens have exercised their educational options. Other summertime fare includes gardening tips and reading options.

Technologically speaking, we find yet other means to have education delivered including the Futures Project in Orange County.

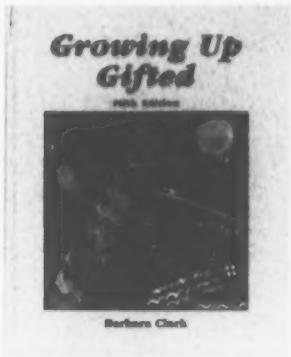
Educational options are explored further in the curriculum section with "The Mirman School," "Magnet Schools Offer Options for Gifted Students," "Coordinating a Community of Learners," some curriculum ideas, and Angel Barrett's "Gymnast Exemplifies Effective Strategies for Gifted Learners," yet another example of giftedness through athletic excellence that was featured at the CAG conference.

Choose your reading options and experience a broadened view of the many ways we can learn and develop our gifts in the summer of our lives. ■

PARENT TO PARENT

Growing Up Gifted - A Parent's Review

BY LAURIE BUCKLE



Growing Up Gifted
Fifth Edition
By Barbara Clark
Merrill, 1997

After 18 years and five editions, *Growing Up Gifted: Developing the Potential of Children at Home and at School* (Merrill/Prentice Hall, 1997) by Dr. Barbara Clark continues to inspire parents and teachers alike to rise to the challenge of understanding and educating gifted, talented, and creative learners. This is no easy task, and as Clark herself concedes, "We've got a long way to go. The ideal educational system is very different than what we have—in the best of all worlds, the child will be allowed to master areas of interest and then move on, without concern for their age."

Clark, a professor in the Division of Special Education at California State University, Los Angeles, and the coordinator for graduate programs in gifted education, speaks passionately on the subject of gifted children, their needs, and their value to society. In this updated edition of her now-classic reference, parents will find sound advice, reassuring examples and explanations, and inspiration for raising their children in an environment that encourages giftedness.

"The information in this book needs to be in the hands of parents," says Clark. As she notes in the book's preface (and expounds on in chapters four and five), the foundations for "optimal" intellectual growth are established by the parents in the early years of a child's life. "Children are not born gifted," she explains. "Genetics is a programmer but not a limiter. We, as parents providing opportunities for our children, create giftedness."

In the chapter entitled "Becoming Gifted," Clark offers scientific explanations for her theories and offers parents advice on creating the ideal, most responsive environment for early learning, including detailed charts of age-appropriate caregiver activities. These activities include turning lights on and off to visually stimulate a newborn and making scrapbooks with a two-year-old to provide a "symbolic language experience." Clark also provides detailed and exceptionally useful information on selecting a preschool. At the end of each chapter, the reader will find informed answers to questions that Clark has been asked over the years, such as "How do you discipline a gifted child?" and "How early should children be taught academic subjects such as reading and math?"

In chapter five parents may recognize (and begin to understand) their own children as Clark explains common gifted characteristics such as perfectionism. She offers numerous suggestions for parenting gifted children, from permitting them their own individuality to simply enjoying living with them. There is advice on overcoming the difficulties created in a situation where one sibling is identified as gifted while another is not, and there is a section on establishing a family council in which every family member gets an opportunity to express an opinion, right a wrong, and help to make decisions.

The book's second part focuses on educating the gifted child. "Parents," Clark believes, "have real jobs to do as advocates." In fact she is of the opinion that, in the interest of supporting and sustaining gifted children everywhere, "it may well fall to the parents to see that we don't lose our talent." Throwing away talent, by allowing it to succumb to an educational system that does not meet the needs of gifted and talented learners, "penalizes everyone, including society as a whole."

From Clark's perspective the age-organized structure of the educational system as it exists now is the biggest obstacle we have to nurturing giftedness. In chapters six through eight, she outlines programs for gifted children that work within the confines of current curriculums and includes methods for developing such programs, from the hiring of a coordinator to the involvement of the community. "There has to be differentiation," she says, "and a teacher with a specialized education." Other essential elements of successful programs outlined in the book include flexible grouping, intellectual peer interaction, and continuity.

In *Growing Up Gifted*, parents will find the information they need to help them distinguish between good, mediocre, and bad

gifted programs. There are ideas for improving existing programs and creating new ones, and there is advice for working with teachers to create the ideal learning environment. "Parents will find suggestions for the kinds of actions that they can take," promises Clark. "I wanted this book to inform and to be useful," she says, and she has certainly achieved that goal. ■

LAURIE BUCKLE, writer and editor for Bon Appétit, is the parent of three children, the oldest of whom is a fifth-grader in the Highly Gifted Program at Carpenter Avenue School in Studio City.

The quotes in this article from Barbara Clark are from an interview, not from *Growing Up Gifted.*

A Summer Afternoon

Summer afternoon
Warm, very warm
Boiling hot
Walking on flaming hot cement,
People in their bathing suits,
Elders waving delicate fans in the front yard.
The air is so dry like the abandoned bare desert,
It's a summer afternoon:
clear blue sky
a sea of birds circling the air
dogs barking
cats sleeping.
Everything is hot and dry.

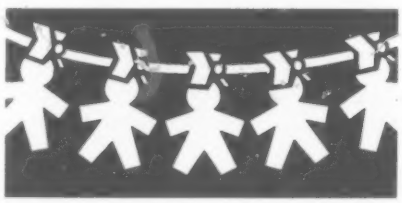
Nazanin Izadpanah
Grade 8, Porter Middle School
Mrs. Sally Smith, teacher

OFF-THE-RACK EDUCATION

Give me a perfect size-10 student **BY RAENELE CÔTÉ**

Have you ever noticed how education is a lot like shopping at Nordstrom? You enter a classroom, like you enter the store, with high expectations for finding just what you want, something that fits you perfectly, but you often end up settling for quite a bit less.

I have worn a size 10 dress all of my adult life. But I am quite aware that not all size 10s are created equal. Some of us are tall, some are rather short; some are heavier or lighter that others; some are short-waisted, some long. Yet we are all size 10s, and we all head for the same rack in the store where the size 10 garments hang, designed for an ideal: the perfect size 10.



There are a few lucky women whose measurements exactly reflect those of the ideal, the size 10 fit model. They never have to try things on; whatever they select will fit as if it were made for them. The majority of us, however, know that when we take our selections into that small, badly lit dressing room, we will have to make some compromises. Even though, to a critical eye, a garment may be a little too loose, too tight, too short, or too long, we may decide that it fits well enough that we can wear it comfortably.

Another group of size 10s is not quite so lucky. Unless they put themselves in the hands of the alterations department, they run the risk of having their cheeky children comment, "Nice dress, Mom. Too bad they didn't have your size." However, once alterations has worked its magic, these size 10s can wear their dresses as if they, too, were fit models.

Finally, there is another group that cannot get away with off-the-rack dressing or get a good fit with the help of alterations. Maybe it's a question of uneven shoulders or hips, very long arms, or a thick waist. To alter a ready-made garment to fit these size 10s would require major reconstruction—an impossibility for even Nordstrom's alterations department. The answer is custom tailoring. Yes, it is more complicated and more expensive than the alternatives, but with the proper tailoring, these size 10s, too, can look like fit models and be comfortable in their clothing.

When teachers "teach to the middle," they are designing their lesson plans according to the needs of an ideal—the perfect size-10 student. Some students fit the ideal so well that they have no difficulty producing what is expected of them and being understood by their teachers. The majority are not perfect matches but can adapt—most of the time they will be successful in the classroom. Finally, though, there are those students who, no matter what they do, do not and cannot fit the ideal. They need an altered curriculum or a custom-tailored education. Perhaps these students are gifted. Perhaps they are slow learners or have learning disabilities. Perhaps they are students with average abilities whose learning styles differ from those employed by their teachers.

Whatever the cause, these students deserve the chance to maximize their individual potentials. If they need alterations in their curriculums or custom-made curriculums to do so, we have a duty to provide the necessary adaptations. First and foremost, of course, our teachers and our schools must be willing to recognize the individual needs of students and be willing to respond accordingly. One size does not fit all in education any more than it does on 7th Avenue. ■

RAENELE CÔTÉ is CAG's Orange Region Parent Representative.

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Homeschooling—is it right for you?

BY B.J. DARR

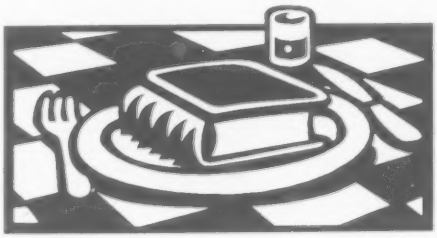
Although education at home has long been a part of American culture and history, it is only within the past few decades that it has experienced renewed attention and growth. Various studies estimate the current homeschool population in the United States at about 1.2 million, with an annual growth rate of 15%. This figure puts homeschoolers ahead of the total public school enrollment in the states of Wyoming, Vermont, Rhode Island, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Hawaii, Delaware, and Arkansas combined. Over 10,000 of these homeschoolers are located in California alone. Legal in all 50 states, home education is burgeoning as a valid educational option. The gifted community is also discovering the many benefits home education can have for talented learners.

But what exactly is homeschooling? When our family first considered this option, we thought that if we could just wade through all the information about curriculums and pick the perfect one, we'd have a home school. We soon discovered, however, that homeschooling is not something you can "get." As the California Homeschool Network describes it, "No two homeschooling families are alike; they define and create their own methods of education, incorporating their own values, belief systems, and talents. Decisions regarding the content, pacing and manner of each child's education belong first and foremost to the family." In brief, homeschooling is taking responsibility for your child's education and making a personal commitment to your child's learning.

Weighing the Decision

As with any educational option, homeschooling carries both pros and cons for the gifted student. One of the major benefits it provides is the freedom to explore personal interests. Many gifted children have been described as having their own agendas and an intense drive to explore particular subjects. Homeschooling validates those interests and provides students with the opportunity to fully explore them. Furthermore, the students' time becomes their own because projects and studies are not interrupted by segmented time periods, as they are in a traditional classroom. In-depth research can become a reality. Allowing students to participate in such decisions about their own learning contributes to their development as self-directed learners.

Additionally, home learners are able to approach each subject at their current level of achievement. You may have a 5th grader who reads at the 10th-grade level, spells at the 3rd-grade level, and is ready for algebra. In fact, your child may be working at every grade level BUT 5th grade. As homeschoolers, you can individualize that child's program and move just as quickly or as slowly as needed. Individualization is particularly advantageous if you have a learning-disabled gifted child or a child who approaches learning in non-traditional ways.



A flexible time schedule also affords homeschoolers access to a wider segment of society than students in traditional schools. Gifted homeschoolers can often be found in the community working with adult mentors in their areas of expertise. Rather than being stunted socially, homeschoolers actually have broadened social experiences and develop a great deal of self-confidence.

There are also disadvantages to homeschooling gifted children. Just as it may be difficult for your child to find a peer group of learners in a traditional school, it may also be difficult to find similarly talented students with whom to share interests as a homeschooler. Co-op homeschool classes may prove too simplistic, and there may be few opportunities for outside study at your child's level with others the same age. Further, community colleges may not welcome an underage student, no matter how well prepared, or you may live in an area

where such programs do not exist. All of these factors can make it more difficult to successfully homeschool your gifted child.

There is also some cost involved in homeschooling. Although there are many economical ways to provide the necessary materials and supplies, funding is ultimately the responsibility of the parents. Even if you enroll in your public school's independent study program (I.S.P.), you should expect some expenses. Generally, only one of the parents in a homeschooling family works outside the home, so the loss of income, real or potential, must also be factored into your decision.

Finally, homeschooling demands a family's time, effort, and energy on an ongoing basis. It requires hard work to discover challenging resources for your gifted child and to plan an appropriate learning program.

Getting Started

If you are seriously considering homeschooling for your family, the first step is to gather as much information as you can. Two state homeschooling organizations are the California Homeschool Network (CHN) and HomeSchool Association of California (HSC). Both groups can answer your questions and link you with other homeschoolers in your area. CHN also publishes the *California Homeschooler Packet* which contains information about books, support groups, resources, curriculum, testing, and correspondence schools. California Homeschool Network may be reached at P.O. Box 44, Vineburg, CA 95487. Telephone: (800) 327-5339. Their Web address is http://www.comenius.org/chnpage.htm, and their e-mail address is CHNMAIL@aol.com. The HomeSchool Association of California is available at P.O. Box 2009, Norwalk, CA 93423. Telephone: (707) 765-5375.

Other homeschoolers can give you the scoop on what life is really like down in the trenches, and they should definitely be consulted during this investigative phase. Major bookstores also often stock national homeschool periodicals such as *Practical Homeschooling* which carries stories and opportunities on the national level.

Finally, ask your state organizations about any local conferences they may be offering. There are usually at least two conferences each year in both northern and southern California, and they offer a wonderful chance to review curriculums, make friends, and attend workshops.

There are five ways to legally homeschool in California:

1) File an R-4 Affidavit, which establishes your homeschool as a private school. You do not need to have a teaching credential to exercise this option. The forms are available at no charge from your local county Office of Education or the California State Department of Education.
2) Enroll in a correspondence school. With this option you will still need to file an R-4 or enroll in a private independent study program with a California address.
3) Enroll in an independent study program (I.S.P.) offered by a private school.
4) Check with your district for information on public schools offering independent study programs, with student work directly supervised by the program's teacher.
5) Hire a tutor who holds a California teacher's credential.

No matter how you establish your homeschool, keep in mind that while home education may be the best choice for your child, it is not perfect. You need to be willing to accept the limitations and shortcomings you find and work with them. Otherwise, when you hit the inevitable potholes, you may erroneously decide that the whole road is impassable. Also as you venture down this road, reevaluate the decision you have made from time to time, so that homeschooling becomes an ongoing choice. ■

B.J. DARR is a home educator and homeschooling consultant. She can be contacted via the *Communicator* editor.

TRY THESE AT HOME

"In a Class of Their Own: Education for Exceptionally Gifted Children, the Best School Can be the One at Home," *Newsweek*, January 10, 1997 (58). Profiles gifted homeschoolers and discusses why more parents of gifted children are homeschooling.

***Family Matters: Why Homeschooling Makes Sense*, by David Guterson is based on his experiences educating his four children at home on Bainbridge Island in Puget Sound. Guterson is also the author of last year's best-seller, *Snow Falling on Cedars*, winner of the 1995 PEN/Faulkner award for fiction.**

***Growing Without Schooling*, Cambridge, MA, 617-864-3100. Magazine founded in 1977 by the late John Holt.**

Three guides that provide information such as getting started, finding resources, anecdotes from homeschoolers, addressing common criticisms, scheduling, and evaluation.

***Beginner's Guide to Homeschooling*, by Patrick Farenga. Cambridge, MA, Holt Associates, 1995**

***Homeschooling Handbook* by Mary Griffith. Prima Publications, Rocklin, CA, 1997.**

***The Ultimate Guide to Homeschooling*, by Debra Bell, Tommy Nelson, Inc., Nashville, London, Vancouver, 1997.**

Check out the following School is Dead Web sites for listings of articles, books, and resource materials:

http://198.83.19.39/School_is_dead/hsarticles.html

http://198.83.19.39/School_is_dead/hsguides.html

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Homeschooling—it's right for the Greens

BY DEBRA GREEN

Once upon a time, I had a hot job. I directed the research that supported Toyota's decision to launch LEXUS luxury automobiles. I provided the data that brought us the lovely gold logo now gracing the hoods of all LEXIS cars leaving the showroom. That, as they say, was then.

Now I have the best job in the entire universe.

I homeschool my child. I even have the high salary to go with it: my pay is in hugs and kisses. Who could ask for anything more?

Homeschooling is one of the best and most important decisions we have made so far in raising our child. For us, it not only works, it is a monumentally enriching experience. We all learn. We all explore. We all grow. As parents, the education of our children is our responsibility. That they learn to read, write, cipher, and above all, make sound decisions are way too important to be left to institutions—public or private. In our case, we compromise. We participate in the school district, but we take the lion's share of the responsibility for the education of our daughter. The teachers are our assistants, rather than the other way around. After all, we are raising the leaders, the researchers, the jurists, the very backbone of the future. This is a weighty undertaking and it is ours.

Our children are so excited about the world and their place in it. They need time to explore it not from a classroom but through experience. Yet they are children and need our help and guidance. It is up to us as parents to be enablers so that these experiences are available from a very early age. Our children need practice making and living with their decisions so that as they reach adulthood they are ready to do this on their own. One does not magically become a grown-up and know how to manage one's life from being told what to do for 18 years. It takes preparation and practice. It is against this backdrop that we homeschool.

We have been homeschooling for three years, and are about to embark upon our fourth. How do you homeschool? How long will you do this? What do you do all day? What about socialization? What about college? These are questions all of us hear. These and other issues are always hot topics in John Holt's national homeschooling journal, *Growing Without Schooling*.

While there as many ways to homeschool as there are homeschoolers, our school district has a dedicated home school department, and we avail ourselves of its services. Our main reasons for doing so are for the academic support and for the community that we develop with others, just like you find when you become part of the public or private school system.

Homeschooler Debra Green and her eight-year-old daughter Hillary

Our assisting teacher offers my daughter a private writing class, based on the University of California Writing Project. In this class, she writes chapter books, completes research papers, explores career options, creates haiku poetry, and all the while develops grammatical correctness. No way could this have happened in a second grade classroom. Watching this growth has been wonderful for us both. Hillary tastes another approach to learning, becomes responsible for her own assignments, and feels the joy and pride of achievement. I am witness to a budding writer and exceedingly appreciative of her teacher, Peggy's expertise in this area.

While Peggy works with Hillary on writing and creative expression, I look after the math and science and social studies. The latter two, I would probably defer until later years, but as part of a school system, these areas are requirements, so we dabble here as well. This year we have completed the fifth/sixth grade math book and have started algebra.

I have found that a marvelous source for texts is our local Friends of the Library where students cannot wait to dump brand new books, and we can pick them up for a song. This is really important when you are buying all your own books. My algebra and geometry books are from Friends. We have also had great success with the *Key To* series (Key Curriculum Press, Berkeley, CA), which includes everything from addition through geometry. We use it for algebra. In science, we work on the scientific method and formal write-ups as we do experiments with everything from food to physics. In social studies, we embark on architectural styles and the profession itself, as Hillary explores this as a career choice.

Choice, specifically the child's choice, is the essence of homeschooling. There are so many choices about what to learn, when to learn it, and how to learn it. We have all the time in the world to delve into subject areas or skim them and come back later. Now, we do this together. As Hillary grows up, she will select topics to explore on her own. Fortunately for her,

developing these skills comes easily and emerging as an educated young woman will be a walk in the park. She has these goals: Hillary will complete calculus, at least. She will be computer literate. She will speak a foreign language. She will read, write, and comprehend at the college level (with commensurate spelling skills). She will have test taking savvy. Day by day, we move toward these goals.

While we do not have a typical day, there are certain things that we do each day and each week. Each day, I make sure that we read, discuss, and do some kind of math. Each week, we go to Spanish lessons, swimming lessons, writing classes, pottery wheel classes, computer programming classes, piano lessons, fine and performing arts workshop, and play with friends. As Hillary becomes interested in various areas, we pursue these as well. In all that we do, I consider how Hillary would like to approach the subject or task, and together we come up with a plan of attack. Because we usually do not use the curriculum from the school, this can be a bit of a challenge, but it is always worth it.

According to our assisting teacher, Peggy, our approach is somewhat unusual. Most homeschoolers either use the books for the appropriate grade(s) of their child/children or purchase a set of curricula and do the same thing. In any case, they follow a pre-designed plan. We do neither. Maybe we should. But, I have found that following Hillary's interests, while mastering skills that will prepare her to follow her dreams, means that we dip into a variety of texts, literary works, and scientific methods at many levels. We also contact professionals in a particular field we are studying and get their views, too. This keeps our studies fresh and fun. The fun extends beyond our work together and encompasses our homeschooling community of other moms and other kids.

We moms, too, have become close friends as our children have become close friends. The synergy of our common goal has produced some marvelous spin-offs in terms of programs for our children. This year, for example, our children are taking Spanish lessons from a native speaker. Some of us participate as well. We searched for our teacher ourselves and set up the program ourselves. The age range of the students is first through sixth grade. Our particular group of kids love fine and performing arts, and, in our area, not much is available. We do, however, have a fine arts center. I proposed a program to them for homeschoolers and, of course, they have arranged a set of terrific lessons. This session has included Shakespeare and culminates with the kids performing *The Tempest*. We go to Sea World, (their GATE program is wonderful). We go to the beach. We go to parks. We go to museums together. This year, too, we will train to participate in the international Odyssey of the Mind competition.

As each new year unfolds, new opportunities unfold. Though we take homeschooling one year at a time, there is an independent study program at the high school level. This program focuses on the student's career aspirations and develops a scholastic agenda based on those goals. Along with academic classes and independent studies, it includes internships with major companies and community service. Homeschoolers receive a diploma from this program, as opposed to a GED. The University of California system has a program for gifted high schoolers. The campus is in our city, so that too is an option. Just like life in California, Hillary has a veritable candy store of choices to consider when charting her course. So chart it she will, in her own way, in her own time, on her own terms. That is the essence of homeschooling. ■

DEBRA GREEN is a homeschooling mom. She has an MBA in Market Research and Computer Science. Her company, JUST RESEARCH is located in Southern California. You may contact her by writing to the *Communicator* editor.

It's Right for Me Too

BY HILLARY GREEN

I think homeschooling is really great. For me there is just no other way to do school. This is so much fun. I get to be with my mom, and I really like that.

I feel that I am very lucky to be able to home school. I get to concentrate on what I am interested in, not what some one else says my grade level should be doing. What I am interested in is math and writing and art . This year I completed 5th and 6th grade math and started algebra. I wrote my first chapter book. It's called, *Polychrome of Oz*. I did my first research paper on architects, and decided to be a civil engineer instead.

One of the best things about homeschooling is, I get to play with my friends more than if I were in traditional school. I'm glad that I'm homeschooled!!

Here are a Haiku and a poem I wrote this year:

Winter

Snowflakes on the ground
Cruel, harsh, unforgiving cold
Icy white beauty

Climbing the Mountain of Dreams

The mountain of dreams is hard to find.
It sits atop the trees and right above your
deepest thoughts.
The mountain of dreams is hard to climb.
Some don't even try.
The ones who climb find sun.
The ones who don't find clouds.
Find sun, my friend, and give it to all

Hillary Green is a homeschooled, 8-year old, second grader

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

10 Lessons Learned Privately and Publicly

BY VICKI BORTOLUSSI

Public schooling is a cornerstone of American democracy. Yet when aspects of public schools fail our children, especially if they are gifted, a parent must sometimes make painful but important decisions and look to other educational options and opportunities. There are a variety of ways to educate the gifted; the education is differentiated, not just the class or the subject. The virtual classroom with courses taught via the internet as well as access to information through the internet itself is transforming education as we know it. As parents we must objectively be familiar with as many ways possible to obtain education for our children and continuing education for ourselves. As educators, especially in publically -funded schools, we must realize the transformation which is now occurring and embrace the opportunity to learn from the wide variety of educational systems now available.

One important aspect from which all of us can learn is the privately-funded school. Of course, there are components of private schools which may not be positive, such as governance not necessarily by federal or state law which were adopted to ensure equity and fairness. But very careful research into private schools, how they operate, how they are governed, who are the teachers, can be an option not to be ignored. In fact, there is much to be learned from private schools, especially for gifted students.

1. Parents are important. In fact, parents should be important at private and public schools. But at private schools it is clear that parents are funding the majority of the schooling so therefore they are listened to has customers or clients. What parents say and ask is listened to welcomed. Shouldn't this be true in all schools? In public education, aren't parents paying the bills through taxes? Yet, because this is done indirectly, the fact seems to be missed and often ignored. Most public school teachers may not consider their students and their parents as people who chose to be in the public school in which they are enrolled and who are in essence paying the salary of the teacher and paying for all aspects of the education including programs and facilities. Why does this indirectness cause us to lose sight of for whom teachers work, not for themselves, but for the children.

2. Each child is unique and special. This is especially true for gifted students. Why can't we have the resources needed in public schools to teach every student as an individual?

3. Parents must participate in schooling, and opportunities are provided for doing so. At many private schools, much work is done to incorporate the parents into committees, boards, and a variety of activities throughout the year without which the school would not be able to function. Imagine what parent involvement and support like this could do to enhance public schooling.

4. Choices can make a difference. If parents and children chose a school, public or private, are they more careful in their selection and are their expectations higher? If expectations are not met, parents and or students do not have to accept what is not working. They need to request change and improvement or move to another situation which works better for all considered.

5. People working for schools must really like the students and must want to be working where they are. The teacher is probably the most important component in the educational experience. If the teacher loves teaching and cares about students, students will be happy, confident, assured, and ultimately will learn because school and learning is a positive and supportive experience.

6. Education is a privilege and an honor. Students should come to school with respect for those loving teachers who are giving of themselves to students. The privilege is not a monetary one, for many private schools have extensive fundraising and scholarships available for students who may lack those resources. Rather the privilege is attitudinal, whether attendance is at a public or private institution.

7. All aspects of the school should work together for the success of the student. Perhaps because private schools are smaller than public schools staff usually get to know each other better and have more opportunities to share information about students they

have in common. Wouldn't it make sense to have everyone who is working on a child's education to work together to help achieve successful options?

8. Education is not just what is learned in the classroom but what each individual practices in daily living. Again, this should be a cornerstone for all education, including that which is learned in the classroom and subsequently in life.

9. Exposure to a wide variety of philosophies, cultures, and opinions is to be encouraged freely. Why are we moving more and more into educating to the middle, dummying-down to the least common denominator? We shouldn't be afraid to hear or to teach controversial topics; rather we should embrace them in a world whose options are rapidly becoming unlimited. Wouldn't it be better to help students explore and experiences differences in the classroom so that they will be comfortable with difference and change when they no longer are in school but are learning for a lifetime?

10. Public or private, school is for students. Choosing the best option for a student should not only be matter of politics or philosophy. Most importantly, it should be what best helps the student to be happy, and healthy, and productive learners. Both systems as well as others such as home schooling and virtual classrooms online all have positive aspects as well as negative ones. No one is better than another. Differentiating education options is as important as differentiating the classroom for gifted students.

Learning is not a public or a private matter; it is essential for all in a free and progressive society. True education and its excellence must be valued and preserved. ■

VICKI BORTOLUSSI, Ph.D., editor of the *Communicator*, is the parent of two gifted children. She is the Dean of Institutional Advancement, Moorpark College.

The Mirman School

BY JANE HOWARD BLITZ

Thirty-five years ago, Norman and Beverly Mirman started a school in their living room with nine students, ages eight and nine, and five teachers. Recess was in the backyard, and the children received lots of exercise being chased by the Mirman's dog.

Situated in the hills above Los Angeles, The Mirman School is an independent, co-educational school designed to meet the needs of academically gifted children ages 5 to 14. The Mirman School is one of only a handful of schools in the United States devoted exclusively to meeting the needs of highly gifted students.

By the following year, they realized they needed more room, and the school moved to a light manufacturing building in West Los Angeles. On a small 50 x 110 foot lot, the school consisted of five classrooms as well as a playground. The children would play handball against the neighboring manufacturing building, and every evening, Dr. Mirman would climb up on the roof to gather the lost balls.

Although space was at a premium, corners were never cut as far as the children having all of their needs met. The Mirmans still reminisce about one of their former students meeting daily with his Latin teacher on a bench on the playground. By 1969, the Mirmans had to rent classrooms several blocks away at a Japanese cultural center.

In 1971, the Mirman School relocated to its current address on Mulholland Drive in Los Angeles. Nestled in the mountains above Bel

Students at The Mirman School represent all socio-economic levels and many races, religions, and nationalities. They are eager, involved, and excited about learning, working together, and having fun sharing their passions.

Air, the beautiful facilities provide a serene atmosphere conducive to learning.

In order for their children to attend this special program, many parents make a strong commitment which may involve personal sacrifice. Students travel from all over the surrounding Los Angeles metropolis including students from Palos Verdes, Pasadena, Agoura Hills, Diamond Bar, etc. The school day is from 8:15 a.m. to 3 p.m. There is no after-school day care, but there are some classes that last until 4 p.m.

The Mirman School is proud of its strong sports program. The teachers work with the students to help them develop an appreciation of physical fitness and the enjoyment that may be derived from participating in active sports. Students learn sports, sportsmanship, and the importance of team play.

A gifted child is defined as two standard deviations above the mean. Highly gifted is three standard deviations above the mean. A score of 145 is three standard deviations above on the Wechsler scale and within the area of measurement for the Binet.

The Mirmans feel that 145 is an indicator of potential for the students. The Mirman School begins testing students at age four and a half. They firmly believe that gifted students will not just get along without special help.

Dr. Sheila Vaughan has been working with the Mirmans and testing students for about 28 years. She remembers when The Mirman School's original eligibility requirement was a minimum IQ of 135. In the late 1970s when the surrounding areas began mandatory busing, the Mirman School received more applications than the school could accommodate. At that time, the decision was made to change from a school for gifted students to a school for highly gifted students.

Highly gifted students need nurturing in order to develop those gifts and to fulfill their potential. Highly gifted students need a supportive environment in which they can develop divergent and critical thinking skills, take intellectual risks, progress at their own speed, and share their unlimited curiosity and love of learning with other bright children. The Mirman School is dedicated to providing an exciting, challenging, and creative environment for these children.

Once a child has been tested and qualifies on the basis of the IQ score, the family makes an appointment with one of the directors of the school. The interview allows the directors and the family to get to know each other and to assess whether the school and the child are a good mix.

While the majority of new students are five and six years old, the school usually has a number of spaces available at other levels. Consideration of older applicants also includes the students' past academic records.

The Mirman School recently held their annual fair. Many alumni returned to visit old friends and reminisce. Typical comments include "We never had the same type of grouping that we had at Mirman," "The synergy

Senior students, 13- and 14-year-olds, pose during a 1995-96 production of *Guys and Dolls*. The Mirman School believes that a whole student is formed by the academic and the creative. To this end, theatre arts is a required course in the upper school. The philosophy is that theatre arts provides the student with outlets to express himself/herself, to listen and to be aware and sensitive to others, to develop self-confidence and poise, and to work collaboratively toward the final product.

that goes on in the classroom is incredible," and "I never realized until later years what we had here."

Students are divided into a lower school, ages 5 to 10, and an upper school, ages 10 to 14. When students graduate at the age of 14, the majority continue in other private schools. This trend has changed in the last four or five years; before then, almost half the students went on to a public high school. Now more are going to local private schools and boarding schools either in California or on the East Coast.

The Mirman School is ungraded, students are grouped according to age and ability. Math is taught first period in order that students may work on their appropriate level as opposed to their age grouping. After math, students return to their classrooms for English/language arts, social studies, science, computers, art, music, physical education, and Spanish. In the upper school, students may substitute Latin for Spanish. Despite their high intellectual potential, the Mirmans are determined that these students be encouraged to be children and not be treated as little adults.

Currently, the Mirman School has 350 students. Staff includes 28 full-time teachers plus specialists in computers, art, music, science, foreign language, and physical education. Each classroom has a teacher and an aide.

Teachers must hold a valid teaching credential and have a minimum of five years experience. They must be able to relate to students without feeling threatened. They must be secure and even delighted to admit that they don't know something and be willing to learn with the students. They must be team players willing to learn from one another. They must also be willing to spend time developing curriculum. Not only do the teachers attend many conferences, they are often presenters. The faculty is encouraged to continue their education and professional growth. ■

JANE HOWARD BLITZ is the Coordinator at Sepulveda Gifted/High Ability Middle School Magnet in the Los Angeles Unified School District. She also sits on the District's Gifted Ad Hoc Committee.

Tell others about your experience with private schools. Send your thoughts electronically to vckib@aol.com.

Dr. and Mrs. Norman Mirman

Although rumor has it that the Mirmans have retired, happily, it is not true! Norman and Beverly are not retiring, after 35 years, they are just taking it easier.

The Mirmans have always been involved in the day-to-day activities of The Mirman School and look forward to continuing their involvement as directors. The school was founded in 1962 out of the Mirmans' love for children and a deep concern for their education.

Dr. Mirman received his doctorate in elementary curriculum and administration from the University of California at Los Angeles (U.C.L.A.) and completed his doctoral study in the area of gifted education. He holds the State of California Life Diploma in the general elementary teaching field, as well as a General Secondary teaching credential and the Elementary Administrator's Credential. He has served as instructor in elementary school curriculum at U.C.L.A. He has written numerous articles on the education of gifted children and has lectured on this subject at the University of Southern California and California State Universities at Los Angeles and at Northridge.

One of the founders of California Association for the Gifted, Dr. Mirman is past President of the National Association for Gifted Children, a member of Phi Delta Kappa, and numerous other professional and civic organizations.

Mrs. Mirman is co-founder and co-director of The Mirman School. She attended Brooklyn College and the University of Tampa. Mrs. Mirman completed graduate studies in early childhood education at U.C.L.A.

Mrs. Mirman's responsibilities and talents extend to every phase of the school's operation. Mrs. Mirman supervises personnel and participates in the selection of new staff members. She helps set admission policy and advises on the admittance of new students. She is directly involved with the school's relations with all of its parents, students, and the community. Children feel free at any time to come into Mrs. Mirman's office, whether to discuss the beef content of hot dogs or climb up on her lap for comfort with a bruised knee.

In March, 1996, Dr. and Mrs. Mirman received the CAG Award of Recognition for continued service to gifted students.

Oak Grove High School

Dancing with Shadows

Graduation Address 1997

BY MEREDY MAYNARD

Editor's Note: *Private schools can provide options and divergent points of view for students, which can often meet the needs of gifted students. This graduation address gives an insight into the educational philosophy of one such private school.*

Welcome to the 1997 Oak Grove School Graduation Ceremonies. Each and every one of you contributes to the quality of this school's environment and the education we provide. On behalf of the universe, I extend my deep and heartfelt appreciation.

There is nothing more magical or relaxing than to sit quietly in the oak grove watching the sun filter through the oak trees and scatter across open meadowland. There's something about the light, how it dances with the shadows in constant movement and flux. We dance with shadows. Oak Grove School blossoms in the shadow of a great man whose clear and intelligent insight planted a seed, the intent of which sometimes seems to be overwhelmingly unattainable given the limitations of our human condition. In the wake of Krishnamurti's death we struggle to gain insight from his words; we turn to quotations attempting to draw nourishment from their clarity. I stand here at the podium feeling the pressure to speak in lofty terms and at the same time I feel the shadow of that pressure. I wish to speak what is true. I wish to tell the story of what is.

No one, as far as I know, became enlightened this year. Although we may set our sights on levels of consciousness that are undoubtedly worthwhile, our daily work is occupied in simple things. We spend time considering what it is to be kind, considerate, and courteous of one another. We practice seeing the other's point of view. We encourage each other to admit when we don't know. We attempt, not always successfully, to be honest. We try to listen. We make mistakes, forgive each other, and start over—one of those small but significant human interactions—when someone is capable of saying "sorry, I messed up" and "that's okay, let's try again." Compassion and understanding for our human frailty seems essential in order for growth to take place. I have faith that this is a place where one can fall down and be assisted to stand again rather than be reprimanded for falling in the first place.

But Oak Grove is not a perfect place or a paradise. There is much work to be done. The world is on the brink of environmental disaster and we, too, suffer from complacency and an illusion that someone else will take care of the problem for us. It's easy to become insular and regard the world as "out there" instead of "right here." We are beginners at treading lightly on the earth and with each other, at responding with an intelligence that acknowledges our limitation and the tricks of mind that categorize and hold fast our opinions and push truth underground. Our work is difficult and there are times when we all doubt if anything at all is taking place here beyond a good academic education. The question I am most frequently asked is "what's so different about Oak Grove?" and just as frequently I am tongue-tied. Most days my gaze falls upon a large and sprawling bunch of teenage people who require constant nagging to clean up after themselves. On the 15th time I've asked a student to please keep their voice down, I'm ready to tear my hair out, like a frazzled mother of 45 hormonally challenged adolescents.

Then, on another day, unexpectedly, I will fall witness to this same group rescuing an injured hummingbird, or a three-legged lizard, or a fellow student having a bad day with such deep care and thoughtfulness for LIFE and each other.

I hold my breath at the possibilities contained within each moment.

I am tremendously proud and delighted at the achievements of our students—in academics, in the arts, in sports, and a myriad of other accomplishments—but what I value most, what is so stunningly absolute, is their infinite capacity for goodness.

This graduation ceremony is in honor of PARENTS, particularly mothers, and one particular mother—Lena Frederick—who we lost this year to breast cancer. Lena's children Rowan and John Michael, who attended Oak Grove from pre-school through high school, are a testament to what can be done when a partnership is formed between a home and a school whose purpose is to provide the

nurturing soil from which a child can grow and flower.

Tonight, six students graduate, each of them uniquely grown: Adrienne with her incredible musical talent. Han Saem with her diligence and persistence toward her goal of studying medicine. Juno, outrageous actor, poet, and human being. Aisha and her fierce devotion to human rights. John with his passion for baseball, fishing, and marine biology. Serra, friend to the earth and all creatures great and small that walk upon the planet.

This group has a collective identity too: The class most frequently full of righteous indignation at the state of the world. The class least likely to accept things as they are but to lay bare their complaint and insist we look again—upside down, backwards, and inside out, possibly even whilst hanging from a tree...barefoot. These are the students that kicked and screamed their way into young adulthood, I think, because adulthood represented too many boxes and narrow grooves, far too much conformity to the norm.

These are the questioners, the critics, the troublemakers. You wouldn't think so by their quiet voices and a predominant shyness, but don't be fooled. They have countless times stopped me in my tracks, forcing me to reexamine some long held assumption—I profoundly thank them all for their fresh insights and simple friendship. They are a group willing to share their shadows along side of their light: their anger, their confusion, their tears.

They stand here on the threshold of their futures. My wish for them is that all their lives they remain, in the words of Mary Oliver, "brides, married to amazement, bridegrooms taking the world into their arms." That they find a place in the world which embraces the whole of them. A place where they can be authentic, honest, and real. My hope is that they keep stirring up trouble. That they don't succumb to a notion of what they should be but continue to grow into who they are, because who they are is so very precious.

One of these graduates is my daughter, who several months ago, when I asked her what she needed from me as her mother, looked me straight in the eye and with considerable kindness replied, "Mom, all I need now is for you to let me go." Eighteen years of parental challenge flashed before me: potty training, the terrible twos, first days of school, the agony and ecstasy of pre-puberty, puberty, post-puberty, and here the greatest challenge of all was not going to be an active endeavor of patient problem-solving...but after all the years of exercising and strengthening those muscles of independence, the challenge was going to willingly and without fuss, to step back, cut the string, and watch her fly away.

We hold our children tight to us, protect them and love them with a fierce devotion until their roots are thick and deep... so that when the time comes... they will scatter themselves like wildflowers... across the yellow savannah... and they will grow high, high above the grasses... turning their wild smiling faces toward the good sun.

Han Saem, Juno, John Aisha, Adrienne, Serra... the time has come.

MEREDY MAYNARD is director of the Oak Grove High School, Ojai, California. She is a mother of three children and is also a published writer.

SOME PRIVATE SCHOOL OPTIONS*

THE HARKER SCHOOL
500 Saratoga Avenue
San Jose, CA 95129
408-249-2510
www.harker.org

Founded in 1893, Harker School serves students K–8 drawing from communities such as Los Altos, Cupertino, Saratoga, Los Gatos, Almaden Valley, Morgan Hill, East San Jose, and Fremont.

THE MIRMAN SCHOOL
16180 Mulholland Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90049
310-476-2865

Founded in 1962, The Mirman School provides a comprehensive program for highly gifted students.

NUEVA SCHOOL
6565 Skyline Boulevard
Hillsborough, CA 94010
415-348-2272
www.nueva.pvt.K12.ca.us/

Founded in 1967, the Nueva School is a pre-K to eighth grade school for gifted and talented students. It is located in Hillsborough on a portion of the former Crocker Estates.

OAK GROVE SCHOOL
220 W. Lomita Avenue
Ojai, CA 93023
805-646-8236
E-mail: oakgrove@rain.org

Founded in 1975 by J. Krishnamurti, Oak Grove is a pre-K through 12th grade school.

***This is presented as information, not an endorsement.**

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

Alternative Assessment

Coming closer to measuring learning

BY BARBARA CLARK

During the past decade, assessment has become an important issue in education. The reliance on standardized and multiple-choice paper and pencil tests has been challenged. Among the reasons are an inherent mismatch between the impersonal, mechanistic methods of assessments used in the past and the current focus on students and the meaning centered approach to learning. The more traditional methods of assessment are of special concern for gifted learners as they often know too much about the subject being tested to reduce their answers to a simple yes or no or to select one from the multiple choices. For example, during one of my first testing experiences with the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, I asked a very bright 8-year-old boy, "Who discovered America?" He thought for a moment and then said,"Well, some people think it was Christopher Columbus, but I think the Vikings came before he did...." He proceeded to mention three or four other possibilities that his research had found as possible discoverers. According to the standardization material accompanying the test, I could only repeat the original question seeking one correct answer to record as his response. The child finally, with a great deal of discomfort, suggested that the most probable person in his mind was Leif Eriksson. The manual allowed only the response of "Christopher Columbus" to be counted as correct. It seems that too much knowledge can be difficult when such limited testing is used to assess gifted students.

Many teachers desire to have more responsibility for their professional judgment and control over decision making than many standardized tests allow. Most teachers have found many current tests are not giving information useful to them and do not reflect the classroom learning experience. Tests now being used frequently sample only a limited number of skills and fail to assess the students' higher level skills or strategies for problem solving. Some researchers find that multiple-choice tests focus only on low-level cognitive work with the result that such tests have skewed the curriculum toward the teaching of the most easily measured basic skills and isolated facts. Other reasons given for the development of alternative assessment are: the broader range of academic and nonacademic competencies that now form educational goals, the need for assessment practices to enhance the learning and teaching processes, and the need for more accurate and useful information regarding the specific knowledge and skills students are mastering.

The Purpose of Assessment

Assessment has at least six major purposes: (1) screening and referral; (2) eligibility, placement, and classification; (3) instructional planning; (4) monitoring pupil progress; (5) evaluating program effectiveness; and (6) the advancement of student learning. For gifted learners there is a special concern about the relationship of assessment to instructional planning and the advancement and monitoring of pupil progress.

The advantages of alternative assessments include the focus on a demonstration of competence as opposed to recognition of correct answers to contrived questions, the teacher's ability to view the process of problem solving, the ability to elicit real understanding, the promotion of higher-order thinking, the change from fragmented teaching to teaching for coherent understanding, the result seen in greater teacher empowerment, and the higher motivation for students to excel than is found in use of traditional testing.

What is Alternative or Performance Assessment?

The discussion of new forms and practices in assessment has created a number of related but different terms and concepts:

Alternative assessment is any way of showing growth, finding out what a student can do, and informing instruction that differs from the standardized or traditional test. This could include performance assessment. The major difference is in the re-

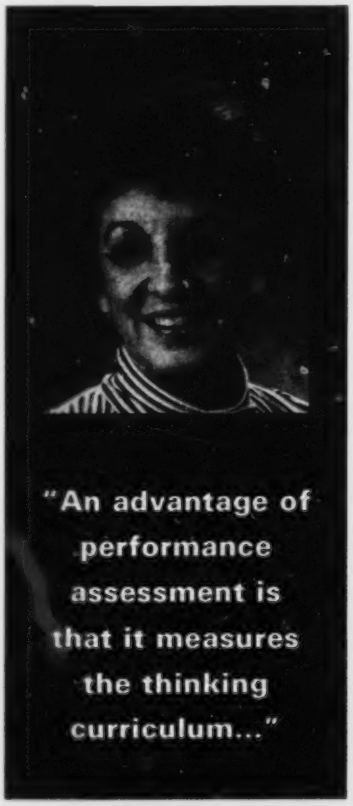
sponse required by the student. In traditional testing, students are asked to select and mark correct answers, while in alternative assessments, students are asked to produce, construct, demonstrate, or perform a response.

Performance assessment is a broad term that refers to opportunities given to students that allow them to demonstrate and apply their knowledge and understanding of content and skills being taught. Such tests are designed to assess what the student can do with knowledge. These assessments often occur over time and result in a product or observable performance. An advantage of performance assessment is that it measures the thinking curriculum rather than being limited, as multiple choice testing often is, to the measurement of recognition and retention. Performance assessment can take many forms including: observations, journals, group work, class presentations, and/or portfolios.

Authentic assessment requires that the knowledge and process of the content be demonstrated under the conditions in which the achievement would normally occur. That is, demonstrations that give information that shows actual progress toward instructional goals and reflects activities of classrooms and real-life settings is authentic. Some authors suggest that valid authentic assessment must be worthwhile, significant, and meaningful. Not all performance or alternative assessment is authentic. While the terms alternative, performance, and authentic assessment are often used synonymously, they have distinct connotations.

What are Standards and Rubrics?

A characteristic of performance assessment is that it is a demonstration of what has been learned, and such demonstrations will be judged based on a continuum of agreed upon standards of excellence. Here again is the possibility for confusion. There are several types of standards including; content standards, performance standards, opportunity-to-learn standards, lifelong learning standards, and world standards.



Standards require educators to clearly identify what a student should know (content standards) and what they should be able to do (performance standards). Reaching consensus on the most important things to know in any subject, let alone how to demonstrate that knowledge and the levels of achievement possible, is not an easy task.

Content standards establish what knowledge and skills should be learned specific to a given discipline or various subject areas. They state important concepts and generalizations and should identify the key elements in content areas.

Performance standards establish the degree or quality of student performance on the performance tasks selected to give evidence of competency on content standards according to the National Council on Education Standards and Testing. Performance tasks give concrete examples and explicit tasks that can be used to demonstrate the students' knowledge or skill. They require an extended period of time to complete and require students to construct new knowledge. They should include real examples of student work from which other students could learn. When presenting performance standards to students, teachers will find it useful to discuss the differences in performance explaining why one product is at a higher level than another offering key elements that make it better.

Rubrics, often developed from levels one to six (with six being high), define the levels of achievement possible for each demonstration or performance. They describe student performance at various levels of proficiency and provide better information of the strengths and weaknesses of students than grades alone could provide. Common rubrics that can be used in many classrooms are being produced by educators which allow a shared criteria for what constitutes quality work.

Opportunity-to-learn standards give the conditions and resources necessary to give students an equal chance to meet the performance standards.

Lifelong learning standards are specific to no discipline and can be used throughout the student's lifetime.

World or world-class standards communicate the expectations held for students in other countries.

The new assessment methods attempt to show a relationship between school tasks and those found

See ASSESSMENT, 48

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Our Youngest Talents

BY SYDNEY TYLER-PARKER

Forward by the Author

Sometimes you write a review about a book, but this time a book prompted me to write an article about the topic—set down, if you like, a few of my own experiences and observations. *Gifted Children* by Ellen Winner[1] does not strike me as profound, but neither is it strident or professorial. She suggests a point of view, but gently without pontificating. The profoundly gifted constitute a tiny, neglected few. We lose as many as we find. Do these children even have a constituency beyond their parents? It is a point we might do well to ponder, even if, as I suspect, little will change inside our schooling structures. She reviews these children within an address to the general field. She provides excellent, extensive references and examples while setting before the reader a feast for thought. In an era when the ideas of others are too often rammed down our collective throats or branded as elitist, politically incorrect, etc., perhaps this suggestive, listening quality in and of itself should mark her work as more important than it might at first appear.

The train is in the hospital," says Ms. Whitman, "and you may not teach the ferret to climb the Christmas tree." Matthew finally settles on teaching Taki to play chess. Finding preschool playmates for this enticing endeavor has proven impossible, so Taki has been drafted, when he's not preparing for violin concerts. Matthew's also teaching Shelby, but his three-year-old brother takes the pieces on his side and "encamps" the king. Wails of the, "Mummy, Shelby won't move his pieces down the board" variety do not deter "encamps," which are vigorously defended by their creator. Daddy plays too, but he's not available for the number of hours Matthew wants to devote to this activity.

Matthew's bedroom is now a railroad line. He insisted that everything else needed to go elsewhere (Mummy drew the line at moving the bed.) so his electric Bullet Trains and Rokkoliners could roar freely from Tokyo to Osaka-Kobe. Zoom they do—over the bridges, through the tunnels, into the trees, and around the cities. He sets them up "my way," coupling and uncoupling track to change the switches, directions, and destinations. Meanwhile Shelby, highly verbal by two, continues to test the doorway frontier. One toe over the line prompts screams—"Mummy, Shelby's coming into my room." Shelby angelically replies, "I'm only watching them."

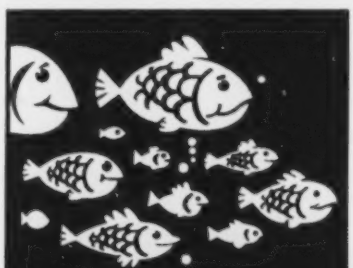
Am I still writing this to people who think highly gifted preschoolers are the next thing to heaven? Ms. Whitman co-teaches eight of them with an aide each Montessori morning. By noon she and Mari-san have sorted out computer programs and discussed the outcome of a science experiment—"What would happen if you changed this? What would happen if you moved that?" They have convinced them to choose paired activities and dealt with the reality that some need four activities an hour, cleaned up an unauthorized water system test (What happens if you turn all the water buckets up-side-down?), written a note for each child in the home-school notebook, and supervised this group's least favorite activity—put it away time.

The late Dr. Arnold Gesell[2] said of the truly gifted, "There is a naturale that is there from the beginning." What he did not add were the realities of day-to-day life with super bright toddlers and preschoolers, particularly those highly motivated, graced with an intensity of purpose, and interested in things beyond their physical capacities. Matthew hasn't napped for years, can operate all the sophisticated electronic equipment within reach, and has been arguing for two years about the fact that he cannot play Super Nintendo when daddy is not home. As a result of watching Alice in Wonderland fall down the rabbit hole at one and a half, he unlocked the safety bolt, flew out his bedroom window, and nearly died on the paving stones below. At three, when he was collecting Tommy Tank Engines, he started bumping people when he wanted them to go somewhere or do something. After the "What do

you think you're doing?" scenes, his mother reviewed a few Tommy videos, which revealed that this is the method used by naughty freight cars when they want to tease the engines.

All this sets the stage for what is too often a battle royal in the early grades. The highly gifted young, particularly those with pronounced personalities and defined avenues of interest, often deviate dramatically from the K-2 norm. They don't want to play cooperatively with the water table, they want everyone to stop interfering and let them put in rivers, lakes, inlets, and dams using whatever play equipment appears useful. If the red cardboard blocks bleed into the stream, what will the green ones do? Their vision of what a cave under the tables should look like may lead all the library books out of their shelves, like mysterious voyagers sliding across the floor into piles around the table legs. When this is protested, the answer echoes around the walls, "But I need that for my ... !" There are no simple negatives. Even "I don't know" prompts a, "Why don't you know?" Two hours and 47 questions into the Osaka Aquarium Matthew earned a personal time out. He was not allowed to ask anyone anything for 15 minutes. The late Richard Feynman, Noble Laureate Physics, said in a lovely vignette on his father that the most wonderful thing he did for him was answer all his questions.[3] He goes on to say that he later found out many of the answers were wrong, but that didn't matter. It was the time, attention, and attempt that he treasured.

Schools promote cooperative, shared learning. For the highly gifted, this can mean detentions for the dripping blocks and a solo session putting books back onto shelves. Even worse, it usually means everyone within a prescribed perimeter of achievement with little tolerance to the kind of motivational intensity and individualism which leads to demands for ever more attention and information. Along the same lines, teacher tolerance for running battles over everything from library visits and shared equipment to dismantled activity centers can run short fast, and it doesn't stop there. I usually have one or two boys in the fourth and fifth grade gifted pullout program whose teachers emphatically tell me that these are not gifted children, merely a pain in the neck, immature, or both. Peeking back into their not too far distant pasts, I usually discover that this perception has been shared by the school staff from the beginning. Rarely do I find any notation of unusual abilities or talents.



"Two hours and 47 questions into the Osaka Aquarium Matthew earned a personal time out. He was not allowed to ask anyone anything for 15 minutes."

All this has led Matthew's mother to the doors of the school well in advance of his September kindergarten entrance—in this case an academy for corporate expatriate families in Kobe, Japan. She has made it clear she will be a persistent voice and active volunteer. Her days spent in each kindergarten revealed wide differences in how children are dealt with when problems arise, irrespective of the similarities in terms of program content. The teacher who will support and even encourage the barrage of questions and insistence on trying it "my way" is not a universal phenomenon!

It is at this boundary, I suggest, that the stage is set for success or disaster, and the long arm of "difficult child" can follow throughout a schooling career. How many of these rare children have such an active, engaged, and knowledgeable parent at the ready? Ansel Adams' father took his desperately unhappy son out of school after Grade One. Steven Spielberg's[4] mother cheerfully played hooky with him so he could do film projects and ignored elementary protests. On the flip side of this coin, Lola's K-1 teacher referred her for antisocial behaviors and adjustment problems until I stepped in and suggested the problems might stem from a source other than poor Hispanic parenting. No one had noticed that she was three years above grade level in two languages and extraordinarily advanced conceptually. I should add that they were no more enthusiastic about considering it now, any more than Matthew's soon-to-be headmaster is about dealing with his mother. Fortunately Lola had not yet moved from disliking school to hating it, so we were able to significantly change her experience of school before it was too late. Her new teacher also changed the kind of instructional opportunities she encountered, which probably did more to improve her behavior than any intervention, except the special, appropriate attention she now received.

What does all of this signify? Having taught this group in the regular classroom for 11+ years with a watchful eye on the statistics regarding the underachieving gifted, I would advance the idea that schools should take a long look at children who are considered somewhat to very difficult in

See YOUNGEST TALENTS, 49

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ACE IS THE PLACE

An Accelerated Option for Gifted Students

BY TERRY A. THOMAS

Over the past 12 years California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) has sponsored a community outreach project to support educational opportunities to gifted and talented students, the Accelerated College Entrance (ACE) program. This early admission to college option for GATE students can serve a variety of different types of students, and the program's effectiveness has been researched and documented.

ACE is a unique program at CSUS that allows pre-college students to enroll in regular university classes while completing high school. ACE was initiated in response to the CSU Chancellor's 1985 Executive Order 461, which was designed "...to assist high schools in meeting the needs of gifted students, and to expand CSU efforts to encourage more able students from underrepresented groups to participate in special programs." A major provision of the order was to authorize campus presidents to reduce costs for the students in "Step-to-College" programs. CSUS President Donald Gerth decided to reduce the cost of ACE to only $5 per semester.

Entry requirements include good grades (GPA 3.0+), high SAT scores (SAT=1100 combined or 550 in one area), readiness for university work, and permission from parent(s) and school personnel. A special condition is that these students must maintain good academic standing with both the university and their regular school. Clearly the intent of ACE is not to lure students away from high school, but to enhance and expand their options. All ACE students participate in monthly meetings with the ACE director to discuss and solve potential problems before they grow out of proportion.. ACE students may register for classes after regular student enrollment is completed, thereby assuring that ACE students do not displace any fully matriculated students from classes. Credits earned through ACE can apply toward a degree program at CSUS or may be transferred to other universities.

Since the first group of about a dozen participants in 1985, the program has enrolled over 1,200 ACE students who have taken classes in almost every discipline on campus. The most frequently selected classes have been in mathematics, music, foreign languages, computer science, psychology, and English. During the 1996-97 year, students came from 32 schools in the Sacramento area. Most of the 65 students were juniors and seniors, but two were from middle schools.

Typically, ACE students come from a wide range of socio-economic levels and ethnic groups. Their backgrounds and experiences in school are vastly different, but the ACE program plays an important role in the education of each. Read these two profiles of students from the ACE program.

Meet Tracy

Tracy is a highly motivated high school junior, who devotes part of her daily study time to university classes. She has completed two university courses each in calculus, English, and Latin, for a total of 22 credits of A's. Along with credits through Advanced Placement testing, she has already earned the equivalent of a year of university studies. Tracy is a full degree candidate in the International Baccalaureate program at her high school, a program in which she has maintained an A average. Tracy is no stranger to academic challenge and accelera-

tion.

Tracy volunteers at the local hospital's crisis nursery, working with abused children. She is the school yearbook editor, runs for the cross country track team, is a cheerleader, and is president of the student council. She volunteers three to six hours each week in the school's tutoring center helping classmates in English, mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics, and other subjects. Tracy also works some evenings and most weekends in the family-owned business.

Tracy aspires to go to medical school to become an obstetrician. She will need substantial financial aid and hopes to land scholarships to help pay her way through college. Her parents are highly supportive, but not financially well off. They immigrated from the Philippines when Tracy was a baby, and they operate a small restaurant to provide for Tracy and her younger brother.

Meet Jason

Jason is now a junior in his high school program. In elementary school, Jason actively participated in the GATE program and enjoyed the special opportunities to learn at his own rapid pace. When it was time to go to junior high school, he and his family discovered that the new school was not prepared to accommodate the needs of students like Jason. A series of bad experiences convinced the family to seek a quality education for Jason outside of the public school. They filed for and received state approval for a home school.

Jason thrived at home study. He accelerated through standard textbooks and took progress tests with high results. To assure social development, his mother saw to it that Jason was involved with age-mates at church, scouts, and other community events. All middle school subjects were taught through home school and self-study. When Jason was ready for high school the family decided to enroll him in the district's independent study program. Jason meets with his independent study teacher twice a week and has made two year's of academic progress through the standard curriculum in half that time.

The ACE program was identified by his counselor as a way to supplement and add breadth to the independent study curriculum. Jason is taking one class each semester at CSUS, and he has completed a semester each of astronomy, economics, computer science, and German. He has maintained a strong B+ average in his ACE classes and continues to show progress in his high school curriculum. Upon graduation, Jason plans to matriculate fully at CSUS, but he has not yet decided on a major.

These two students, Tracy and Jason, are examples of the current ACE participants. Some highly gifted ACE students adapt well to both the secondary school and at CSUS. Others find a less suitable match between their needs and current high school practices. ACE has a place in both of their educational plans.

Follow-up research strongly supports the value of ACE. In 1993, former ACE students were asked to respond to a questionnaire to assess their achievements and attitudes regarding ACE and their academic success. The results from this study were very positive.

Respondents were almost equally divided between males (48 percent) and females (52 percent). Most of the respondents were university juniors (36 percent), with 24 percent sophomores and 24 percent seniors. Four percent of the respondents had moved into postgraduate school. A summary of the survey shows that the ACE experience had long-term, positive consequences, and that these students benefited from their participation.

Academic Acceleration. Earning transferable university credits not only allowed students to move into more advanced college classes sooner, but former ACE students also received the obvious financial benefit these units represented. There was no indication that students suffered from being pushed ahead or had holes in their knowledge, as is commonly assumed, due to the faster paced instruction found in CSUS classes. All respondents had graduated from high school and had gone on to college. Many students were attending some of the most selective universities, including Stanford, Harvard, MIT, Cal Tech, and others. The ACE experience facilitated a smooth transition between high school and full-time university work.

Self Awareness. Students reported that they grew in their self-confidence through the ACE program. While in high school, they realized that they could be successful in university work, and that they were not strange for wanting to learn, even when this motivation was not shared by their age-mates.

Achievement. Most students attributed, at least partially, their high achievement to early experience in ACE. Overall grade point averages were in the B+ range. Academic majors covered the wide range of arts and science disciplines as well as professional fields.

Career Preferences and Future Plans. ACE students reported challenging career choices, indicated satisfaction with these choices, and felt good about their progress toward these goals. Students had a clear view of where they wanted to be in the four years following undergraduate studies.

Comments

Students responded to an open-ended question which asked, "To what extent have your ACE experiences been important to you?" The sample of responses below demonstrates that these students felt ACE was important.

ACE gave me a taste of college life. My classes in calculus were very enjoyable.
Senior math major at MIT

The ACE program was extremely beneficial to me. I was able to have high quality training on my musical instrument, which later led me to win a scholarship.
Senior music major at CSUS

ACE gave me confidence in my academic ability as well as my social skills. At

an early age I learned how exciting college coursework could be.

Graduate student at
Georgetown University Law Center

My ACE experience was invaluable in preparing me for college. ACE is a part of my plan to graduate in three years of undergraduate study rather than four.

Senior business economics major at UC Santa Barbara

I don't know where I would be today with out ACE. It was the best thing that happened to my academic career. I realize how extremely fortunate I was to have that opportunity. Thank you!

Junior computer science major at Stanford

ACE helped me in making an easier adjustment from high school to college.

Sophomore biochemistry major at Harvard

ACE showed that I could do college level work.

Junior computer science major at CSUS

I had so many extra units I had to get an extension to stay in school the full four years.

Senior community studies major at
UC SantaCruz

I took mostly math courses through ACE and that experience motivated me to major in math and then to go on to graduate study in math.

Graduate student in math at USC

In summary, the ACE program at CSUS provides an important community outreach and educational option for gifted students. The profiles of Tracy and Jason illustrate the diversity of students who seek academic acceleration through ACE. Follow up research has demonstrated that the ACE experience can be a significant educational option for gifted students.

Former ACE students reported that their academic acceleration had been beneficial, that their current achievement levels could be traced back to ACE, that they were well adjusted, and were satisfied with their career choices. Student comments showed that ACE was an important experience in their lives. ACE and academic accelerated programs of its type should be included in the overall educational planning for gifted and talented students. ■

Terry A. Thomas, Ph.D. is Professor of Education, California State University. For more information about the ACE program at CSUS, write to Dr. Thomas at 6000 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95826-6098. E-mail: tthomas@csus.edu. Web site: http://edweb.csus.edu/main/school/ATS/ATShomePage.html

High School Students Get Running Start to College

Running Start is a program created by the Washington State Legislature several years ago which allows high school students in that state to attend any community college or university tuition free during their junior and senior years. Students earn credit both at the high school and at the college which is transferrable to four-year universities. Two students who have just completed Running Start share their thoughts about their experience.

BY BILLY CHRISTENSEN

Once I started the Running Start program, I noticed a big difference between the attitudes of high school and college students. And since I see both kinds of students every day (I am currently attending high school and college), I really get an impression of how people act in the classroom.

At my high school the majority of the students are seriously rude and obnoxious. Not all high schools have this problem, but mine does. They are rude to their peers who are trying to learn and obnoxious to the teachers who have to put up with it every day.

College is a different matter. The students are there to learn and are very courteous to other students and faculty. Not all this is entirely true. There are a few exceptions; I once had an English class in which half the class was Running Start students, and you could tell just which ones they were. My instructor got very angry for their insistent talking. Those same students caused problems the rest of the quarter.

After seeing both types of behavior, the high school behavior is becoming sickening to me. I go to school to learn, not to "be cool" in front of my friends.

There are very few drawbacks for this program. Being in a class with obnoxious students from other area high schools is one of them. I like the idea of going to college while still in high school. It is very beneficial for those who want to succeed, but not for those who think they will be given a free ride. Education is our key to the future; let's not lose it.

Bill Christensen graduated this June from North Central High School in Spokane, Washington with 50 quarter college credits. At Evergreen University, he will continue his interests in Russian studies and environmental science.

BY REYNA FRANSENE

Running Start is exactly what it sounds like. It is a program that allows high school teenagers to take college courses for both high school and college credit. The program allows high schoolers to get a running start on college. Many teenagers, includ-

See RUNNING START, 50

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Try Your Hand at Gardening

BY JODY FICKES SHAPIRO

Summer is the time to get outside and try some new things. Gardening is fun to do alone or with friends. Here are some books that look at gardening in new and different ways.

Some picture books provide fun information if you are a very young gardener.

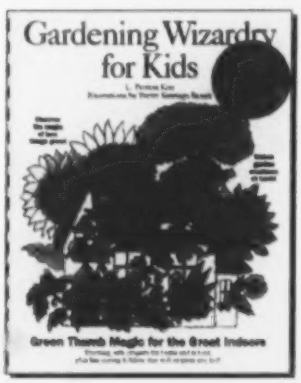
Jack's Garden by Henry Cole shows young gardeners the tools needed to garden. Then the author identifies many insects that live in a garden along with showing the germination process. The many beautiful illustrations of flowers, birds, and their eggs will fascinate everybody.

Jill Krementz relates in first person the pleasure of gardening through the eyes of a six-year-old. In *A Very Young Gardener,* the reader can enjoy the whole planting process through pictures.

Little Green Thumbs by Mary An Van Hage gives students of all ages plant activities for all times of the year. Try to plant succulents inside eggshells. You'll find the directions in this well-illustrated book.

This book won the National Parenting Publications Gold Award in 1995. *Gardening Wizardry for Kids* by L. Patricia Kite is a wonderful book for the gardener who wants to experiment indoors.

The book is divided into six parts: history and folklore of common fruits and vegetables, planting fruits and vegetables indoors, indoor plant-growing experiments, raising earthworms, pill bugs and snails, herb history and growing instructions, and easy plant craft project.



Have you ever wondered if all soil has the same ingredients?

What you need in order to find out:

- one quart jar with a lid,
- earth from three different places, including purchased soil mix,
- crayons of various colors,
- water.

What to do:

1. Fill the jar about two-thirds full of water
2. Add soil from one sample until the jar is almost full. Screw on the top. Shake the container well. Put the container on a flat counter and wait one hour.
3. Sand goes to the bottom first. Silt settles down next. Clay particles are smaller and lighter so they settle down last. You can see the layers in your jar. Draw a picture of this using different colored crayons. Label the picture.
4. Empty the jar and wash it out. Now use the soil from your second sample. You might have collected this soil from a different part of town, perhaps when you were visiting a relative.
5. Repeat the process.

See GARDENING, 26

GARDENING

continued from 25

6. Did you predict the results? Which soil do you think would be best for growing plants? Why?

This is just one experiment included in this exciting book.

Perhaps the most well known of the fictional gardening books is the Linnea series. In the first of the series, *Linnea in Monet's Garden*, Linnea visits Claude Monet in his garden in France. We are introduced to the artist, and the book contains many of his garden paintings. Try painting your own garden by studying Monet's wonderful style in the book *A Blue Butterfly, A Story about Claude Monet*, by Bijou Le Tord.

Christina Bjork continued the adventures of Linnea in the book *Linnea's Windowsill Garden* in which students can learn about all aspects of creating a windowsill garden. Finally in *Linnea's Almanac*, there is a month-by-month gardening guide. The author shows the reader how to do many things such as pressing flowers and creating an autumn crown.

These are just a few of the wonderful selection of gardening books that will motivate and fascinate you this summer. Share a book with your parents and a friend. ■

JODY FICKES SHAPIRO is owner of the award-winning bookstore Adventures for Kids. She is the mother of two gifted sons.

Send your stories, poems, art work, puzzles, and suggestions to: Linda Brug, 3721 Sheldon Drive, Ventura, CA 93003.

How well do your pa

Try this. ◆ Give your parents the Parent Questionnaire. ◆ At the same time they are your answers. ◆ As they learn about you, you can learn about your parents. ◆ Try

Parent Questionnaire

1. Right now, I spend _____ hours a week talking with my son/daughter.
2. When something is bothering him/her I usually: (check the one that comes closest)
   - ☐ assume that the problem can't be all that serious.
   - ☐ am sensitive to the fact that there is a problem, and I am often right about what it is.
   - ☐ take the time to listen.
   - ☐ become deeply involved, giving freely of my experience and advice.
3. When my son/daughter asks for permission to do something, I
   - ☐ usually say "yes" because I trust him/her.
   - ☐ usually say "yes" because he/she is going to do it anyway.
   - ☐ want more information and may want to check things out for myself.
   - ☐ usually say "no" because he/she has such a poor track record.
   - ☐ other _____
4. My son's/daughter's best friends are: (list names)
   _____
   _____
5. His/Her most frustrating experience in the past few weeks was
   _____
   _____
6. The most frustrating experience he/she had with me in the past few weeks was _____
   _____
7. One thing about my son/daughter that I am proud of is _____
   _____
   _____
8. One thing that bothers me about him/her is _____
   _____
9. The biggest decision my son/daughter has ever made on his/her own is _____
10. A mutually agreeable decision my son/daughter and I have made together within the last month is _____
    _____
11. When my son/daughter has free time, he/she likes to _____
    _____

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arents really know you?

filling out their questionnaire, you fill out the Youth Questionnaire. ◆ Share and discuss
to fill out the questionnaire about every six months to see if your answers change.

Youth Questionnaire

1. I spend _____ hours a week talking with my mother/father.
2. When something is bothering me, my mother/father usually: (check the one that comes closest)
   - ☐ assumes my problems can't be all that serious.
   - ☐ figures it out before I say anything.
   - ☐ is willing to take the time to listen.
   - ☐ goes overboard and lectures me. I know she/he means well but it never helps.
3. When I ask for permission to do something, my mother/father
   - ☐ usually says "yes" because she/he trusts me.
   - ☐ usually says "yes," but I wonder if she/he is even listening.
   - ☐ questions me and sometimes really invades my privacy.
   - ☐ usually says "no" because she/he doesn't trust me.
   - ☐ other _____
4. My best friends are: (list names)

   _____

   _____
5. My most frustrating experience of the past few weeks was

   _____

   _____
5. My most frustrating experience with my mother/father in the past few weeks was _____

   _____
7. One of the things about me that makes my mother/father feel proud is

   _____

   _____
8. One thing that bothers my mother/father about me is _____

   _____
9. The biggest decision I have ever made on my own is _____

   _____
10. A mutually agreeable decision that my mother/father and I have made together within the last month is _____

    _____
11. When I have free time, I like to

    _____

    _____

Who am I?

I am a Swedish inventor best known for the award that bears my name. However, my place in history and the millions of dollars used to fund those awards upon my death came from my ability to tame glonoin oil, better known as nitroglycerin. In doing so, I revolutionized the explosives industry by creating dynamite.

Many people feel that I left my fortune for peace awards as retribution over the destructive qualities of dynamite. I prefer to think of the industrial consequences of my work. For example, the use of dynamite made possible the construction of the Colorado River Aqueduct which supplies water to Los Angeles.

Many people do not realize that I am a great romantic even though I never married. I was in love once, but she died. I walked the streets of Paris until dawn and wrote a long, anguished poem to my beloved which I proudly shared with my friends all my life.

I also supported the peace movement. A dear friend, Baroness von Suttner, wrote the classic *Lay Down Your Arms*. In part, she was influential in the establishment of my peace prize. I only intended for the prize to be given for 30 years. I felt that either the world would find peace in that amount of time or it was hopeless. That was in 1893. I am proud that my award has continued and now honors scientists, writers, and others who continue to strive for peace.

From *Quiz Me! Query Me!*
A.J. Barrett

Answer: Alfred Nobel

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Summer Reading Time is Here

BY LINDA BRUG

The gold foil seal is now decorating the newest Newbery Medal winner, *The View From Saturday* by E. L. Konigsburg. This book follows four 6th grade students as they become a winning academic bowl team through the efforts of their quadriplegic teacher.

Even though this book won the top prize, the American Library Association's Newbery committee also chose some other wonderful books for honors. Here is a look at those books:

- Eleven-year-old Nhamo lives up to her name, which means "disaster." She is an orphan living in a tiny village in Mozambique. Her father left when she was born, and her mother was killed by a leopard. Although Nhamo is given a home with her aunt, she is treated like a slave. Only Nhamo's grandmother treats her with kindness. When it appears Nhamo will become the newest wife of a cruel older man, it is her grandmother who urges her to flee to the neighboring country of Zimbabwe to find her father and to make a new life for herself in *A Girl Named Disaster* (ages 12 up).

- In *The Moorchild*, author Eloise McGraw creates a strange but believable world centering on the "Folk"—small people who populate the caverns beneath the moors. McGraw tells the story of Moql, a girl whose mother was Folk but whose father was human. Moql lives with the Folk until she is unwillingly exchanged for a human baby named Saaski. McGraw draws the reader into Saaski/Moql's struggle to determine who she is (ages 9–teenage).

- He's a thief who once boasted he could steal anything. Then he was caught, and Gen was rotting in the king's prison when he was given a second chance. In *The Thief*, author Megan Whalen Turner writes a fascinating tale about how the king's magus uses Gen to help him steal an ancient, priceless treasure (ages 10 and up).

- One morning in October 1953, a woman named Belle Prater vanished from her Appalachian home. No traces could be found of her, and her name became legendary. Belle's husband took to drinking, so their son Woodrow was sent to live with his grandparents in Coal Station, Virginia. His new life is brightened by his friendship with his cousin Gypsy, who lives with her mother and stepfather in the house next door, in *Belle Prater's Boy* by Ruth White (ages 12 up).

LINDA BRUG is *Communicator* Associate Editor, Children's Topics.

HIGHSCHOOLERS GET A RUNNING START

Make sure you read the stories from high school kids about their college experiences. Stories begin on page 24.

Gymnast Exemplifies Effective Strategies for Gifted Learners

BY ANGEL BARRETT

At the 1984 Olympic Games, Peter Vidmar established himself as not only one of the world's greatest gymnasts but also as an inspirational leader and motivational force as well. Vidmar captained the U.S. men's gymnastics team to its first ever Olympic gold medal in a stunning upset victory over the defending world champions, The People's Republic of China.

In addition to the team gold medal, Peter won the silver medal in the individual all-around competition, the only American male to have ever won an Olympic all-around medal, and he earned the gold medal on his specialty, the pommel horse, with a perfect score of 10. Vidmar holds the distinction of being the highest scoring U.S. gymnast, male or female, with an incredible 9.89 average.

A member of the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame, Vidmar has served as a television announcer for CBS, NBC, and ESPN and written articles for *Parade Magazine* and *USA Today*.

Vidmar now spends much of his time translating his skills as a leader and motivator to Fortune 500 companies such as IBM, Mobil Oil, Xerox, Federal Express, 3M, and Coca Cola. In many ways, gymnastics is comparable to challenging gifted students to fulfill their potentials.

Gymnastics is based on a 10-point scoring system. Each skill has a difficulty level from A (easy) to E (advanced). If an athlete has performed perfectly the number of the required A–E skills, the gymnast still only scores a 9.4. The additional points are earned through risk (.2), originality (.2), and virtuosity (.2).

Risk - In order to score big, one has to be willing to take chances. Taking risks involves making mistakes, which is okay if one learns from the mistakes. Playing it safe guarantees that one will not be a champion. Vidmar earned a perfect 10 on the horizontal bars in the 1984 Olympics by focusing on "those little things that one never works on." Working on the problem areas a little every day makes a big difference.

Originality - The key to innovation is to stop watching the other guy and trying to play catchup. Patience and diligence go hand-in-hand. Sometimes uncharted territory may take time to master.

Virtuosity - Virtuosity is doing the same things as everyone else but doing them a little better; it is the hardest to define because it is subjective. The key to perfecting something is most boring and unglamorous - repetition. The trick is to complete a task for the 1,000th time with as much focus and attention to detail as the first time. Focus is easy when something is fun on a good day and one feels like doing it. This attention to detail is most difficult when it is inconvenient and one doesn't feel like doing it. "After five or six hours in the gym, I have to get excited and feel good about what I do."

Gifted education is not based on a scoring system, but differentiated instruction does include many levels: knowledge, comprehension, analysis, application, synthesis, and evaluation. In order meet the challenge, the students must be encouraged to take risks. Students can become complacent when work is too easy and they are accustomed to knowing the right answers. Challenging students to take risks allows them the opportunity to be original, to perform in a new or different way. Finally, helping students succeed in their endeavors also means helping students focus on planning, organizing, and paying attention to detail. Many gifted students seem to come in two extremes: those who are perfectionists and exemplify virtuosity, and those who gallop past all the checkpoints.

Two years ago, I took a group of magnet coordinators from the Los Angeles Unified School District to observe Sara Rolfe's pull-out program for fifth

and sixth grade gifted students in Manhattan Beach. After forming a circle, the students were asked "What do you do when you are in a classroom and you already know a lot about what the teacher is teaching?" Students brainstormed a variety of ideas with no value judgements made. Some responses included: I try to learn three new things, I hide a book in my notebook or textbook, I listen and try to catch

her saying something wrong, and I elaborate on what the teacher says. The discussion ended by students choosing productive alternatives to increase their participation and minimize class disruption. Facilitating student development of coping strategies such as this one help students develop virtuosity.

- Throughout Peter Vidmar's presentation, he demonstrated many strategies effective for gifted students, including a sense of humor, perhaps the most effective strategy of all. ■

ANGEL BARRETT is *Communicator* associate editor for curriculum. She is an advisor for the magnet schools of choice in the Office of Student Integration Services, Los Angeles Unified School District.

Photographs are courtesy of Mia Bortolussi, daughter of *Communicator* Editor Vicki Bortolussi. Mia is currently a junior at Oak Grove High School in Ojai. Mia has had a passion for photography all her life and has studied photography at both the high school and college level including Summer School for the Arts at California Institute of the Arts.

Ode to the Pen

Silent, yet powerful
It holds your messages and thoughts
Controlled at nib.
Disregarded by most,
The most revered orators
Would be speechless without it.

Apparently banal,
It is a slim figure of plainness
Yet capable of the most blatant phrases
Or ostentatious syllables

You might say it is mighty
Even more so than a sword
Though physically
There is more diminution.

A flick of this
Can cause the most bellicose
To fall in tears

Or it might just be as simple
It has many inaudible voices.

Margaret Hwang
Grade 8, Porter Middle School
Mrs. Sally Smith, teacher

Take the Time

Spending Time On How Your GATE Program is Delivered is Time Well Spent

BY JOHN P. DELANDTSHEER

We as advocates, teachers, and administrators who are responsible for the education of our gifted and talented students spend much time on the process of identification. Testing instruments, checksheets, characteristic behavior scales, standardized test scores, and many other pieces are put together to determine the qualifications for GATE placement. Much less time, lately, seems to be spent determining how services will be delivered to our students. It's as if our goal has been achieved when we have completed the identification process, checked the appropriate demographic boxes on the application form, and made our presentations to the Board of Trustees.

Now what?

What program options are present to meet the needs of our identified students once they have passed the test? In the Redlands Unified School District, we restructured our GATE program seven years ago realizing that the previous delivery system was no longer meeting the needs of our students. Our task force, composed of parents, teachers, administrators, and college educators, realized that the needs of our GATE students could not effectively be met with a once-a-week pull-out program where students were bussed to a central location for enrichment activities. We realized that GATE students were GATE all day long, not just on Wednesdays.

The decision was made to cluster GATE students beginning in Grade 3. Clusters were defined as placing all identified students at a given grade level together in one class. However, we quickly realized that this was not enough. It was determined that a critical mass of 10 GATE students was necessary to support the cluster class and make it viable. We also knew there was another critical ingredient:

training. The strong support of our School Board permitted us to require GATE Certification for all teachers who wished to serve as GATE teachers.

The certification was coordinated through the University of California at Riverside (UCR), where a strong GATE Certificate program already existed. GATE funds helped pay the cost of the instructors while teachers paid for the cost of the 12 quarter units (five classes). By the end of the first year, 32 teachers had received their GATE certificates. The UCR Extension Office worked closely with the District GATE Coordinator, and the needed classes were provided in Redlands on weekends.

For those teachers who wished a GATE certificate but who did not wish to receive units for their certification, an IN-HOUSE certificate program was established in year two. This program closely paralleled the UCR program and was taught during school hours. Substitutes were provided for interested teachers out of GATE funds. This strand required a total of 80 hours of training over 10 days. This IN-HOUSE program continues to be one of the most popular staff development offerings in the district. We offer the five classes, three per year, on a continuous cycle. After six years, we have 118 teachers trained with GATE certificates, grades K-MS.

In year one of our restructured program, four elementary schools, due to their small GATE enrollments, sent their identified students to cluster centers: other schools that had more GATE identified. These students joined the GATE cluster classes at their new school. Bus transportation was provided for them. By year three, through more aggressive identification, all of our elementary schools had sufficiently identified GATE students in grades 3–6 to provide cluster classes with trained teachers.

Also in year three, our middle schools restructured their GATE programs. In addition to offering a variety of seminars after school for their identified students, accelerated classes in English, science, and math were offered during the day on a performance-based criteria. This enabled these accelerated classes to truly meet the needs of those students who had a strong desire to move at a faster pace and be provided with a curriculum of greater depth and complexity. The middle school teachers were also trained in the GATE certificate program.

Last year, our elementary schools added another component to their programs with the addition of after school seminars for GATE students at each school. Each elementary school receives a budget allocation based on the number of identified students. With this money each school can provide, in addition to the GATE cluster classes, after school seminars in a variety of areas. This year such activities as a mystery festival, school yearbook, Internet activities, geology, HyperStudio, performing arts, ceramics, desktop publishing, and foreign language instruction were provided for the 3-6 grade GATE students.

Finally, a Saturday GATE miniconference is held each spring. The topic

of the conference varies from year to year. One year the focus was on science and social studies, another year it was performing arts. This year our high school GATE students will be providing the seminar sessions to the 3rd-6th-grade students who must bring a parent in order to attend. One hundred GATE students take part (along with 100 parents). They attend two sessions with a short break in between. This is a very popular activity which requires a minimum of organization and preparation.

"...central to the success of our program is the training that each GATE teacher must complete."

While these special activities and seminars are fun and exciting, we have realized that central to the success of our program is the training that each GATE teacher must complete. The common core of knowledge that is presented to each teacher, the common vocabulary that is defined and used, and the opportunity for teachers to come together to plan curriculum is invaluable. Monthly GATE teacher meetings help re-emphasize the four components of depth, complexity, acceleration/pacing, and novelty that is the core of the training. At the end of each year, two paid but voluntary staff development days are provided for our GATE teachers to work together to share ideas, plan their themes for the following year, and develop curriculum. Generally about 15 teachers take advantage of this GATE planning day.

We know that the process of restructuring is ongoing. We also know that there is not one best way to deliver services to GATE students. We have found that, in Redlands Unified at least for the time being, our delivery system seems to be working for us. We will be carefully re-evaluating it this year and may find that it's time to modify the program options for our students. In either case, we are excited about the possibilities. ■

JOHN P. DELANDTSHEER is GATE coordinator, Redlands Unified School District and is the CAG educator representative for the Joshua Tree Region.

TECH NET

FUTURES PROJECT

BY STAN NG

The Futures Project is an educational enrichment program for gifted and talented high school students in Orange County. It was developed based on the findings and recommendations of studies such as the Secretary's Commission on Necessary Skills (SCANS) report and programs such as Goals 2000. The Futures Project was designed to nurture and challenge high school students to excel and expand in directions not traditionally focused on in public education. The Futures Project endeavors to foster and encourage the following skill sets:

- Teamwork and work group communication;
- Allocation of resources such as time, money, and staff;
- Acquisition, interpretation, and synthesis of information;
- Understanding of social, organizational, and technological systems;
- Familiarity with technology including the Internet and multimedia.

The Futures Project accepted applications from sophomore and junior students from high schools in Orange County. The program accepted 60 students from the 143 applications that it received which represented 23 high schools based on a written essay, teacher recommendation, and academic record.

The goals of the Futures Project were accomplished through two weekend programs, one each in the fall and spring. Students arrived on a Saturday morning and engaged in activities until Sunday afternoon. The program was hosted with an overnight stay at a high school campus.

The Futures Project is sponsored financially by the Western Region of Apple Computer's Education Division. Volunteers for the program came from a number of different community organizations including Apple Computer, Inc., Computer Plus, Taco Bell Corp., the International Research Institute, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and RAND.

Futures Project: Fall 96

The first weekend program was held on November 23-24, 1996, at Canyon High School in Anaheim, California. Fifty-four students participated in the program and were tasked with designing a moon colony. Students were required to create a Web page illustrating their plan and also present their findings

in a 10-minute oral presentation to a panel of judges. The technology focus of the weekend was on the Internet as a research tool and the creation of Web pages.

Students spent the first three hours on Saturday morning in a variety of training programs. A speaker from Apple Computer, Inc. spoke to both parents and students on the growing trends in educational technology. Next, a scientist from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory spoke on planetary exploration in the solar system. Finally, students were split into groups to work on a survival simulation where they learned about teamwork and work group communications. In the afternoon, students were given the option of attending seminars on Utilizing the Internet as a Research Tool, Creating WWW pages, and How to Be Effective Presenters. The remainder of the time was spent in groups planning and putting together the Web page and presentations for the next day. On Sunday, students turned in their Web pages to the panel of judges and delivered their oral presentations in front of the entire group. Groups were judged in the areas of creativity, realism, effectiveness of presentation, and design.

Futures Project: Spring 97

The final weekend program was held on April 19-20, 1997 at Aliso Niguel High School. Forty-eight students participated in the program and were tasked with forming a company to invent a new product or service, write a business plan and business presentation, and create an advertising campaign that included a one-minute commercial "selling" their product or service. Student teams were provided with two mobile computers to create and collaborate on their business plans. Students also used Macintosh computers for access to the Internet for research. Commercials were created with camcorders and Macintosh computers with Avid Cinema. Students were required to create their business plans on the mobile computer (eMate 300).

As in the past weekend program, students spent the first three hours on Saturday morning in a variety of training programs. The COO/CFO of Netcentives Inc., a start-up company in Silicon Valley, spoke to the participants about start-up companies, business planning, and attracting money from venture capitalists. Speakers from Apple Computer, Inc. followed with training on the eMate 300 and the Avid Cinema digital video creation solution. Students were then given the rest of the time to work in their groups. On Sunday, students turned in their eMate 300s with completed business plans, delivered 10-minute presentations to a panel of judges, and displayed their commercials to judges and parents. Groups were judged in the areas of creativity, realism, persuasiveness, research, and effectiveness of presentation.

Conclusion

The project was successful in many aspects. Both weekend programs introduced the participants to new technology in a curricular setting with specific purpose. "The Apple-sponsored Futures program was a phenomenal experience. Being able to augment education with technology was a real treat...," commented Ari Solotoff, a junior at Marina High School. The eMate 300 and Avid Cinema were used as tools which enabled student teams to create extremely high-caliber output. Those technology tools tapped into the creative minds of many of these gifted students and enabled them to express themselves beyond the traditional roles in the classroom.

The project also empowered these participants. The program was specifically made up of mostly unstructured work times. Advisors were available for guidance if students needed it, but for the most part, students felt "ownership" throughout the program and only looked to advisors for clarity on the rules of the weekend. Joann van der Putten, a junior at Orange High School, said "I appreciated the fact that you adults had the confidence that WE could accomplish this." Another student who wished to remain anonymous commented, "I liked the way we had to figure out most of everything on our own; it proved our intelligence."

The focus on workplace skills was also evident throughout the weekend projects. Students learned how to negotiate and compromise within their work groups to accomplish their goals. There was a marked improvement between the first and second weekends in how long the groups took to organize themselves into subgroups with different tasks. Students had learned from their earlier experiences and formed much more efficient working units.

"As the objective of Futures stated, the program allowed for furthering our knowledge in areas not traditionally studied in the classroom. The first program, although very difficult in the aspects that had to be considered, forced us to think about an area of exploration that will definitely be pondered in the future. The latest program allowed for more imagination, but also allowed us to be the owners of a-business, something that could be very important in the futures of the participants," concluded Shawn Haghighi, junior at Los Alamitos High School. ■

STAN NG is an advisory systems engineer at Apple Computer, Inc. He can be contacted for more information on the Futures Project at 18301 Von Karman Ave., Suite 1000, Irvine, CA 92612, 714-260-9233, stan@apple.com

MAGNET SCHOOLS

Magnet Schools Offer Option for Gifted Students

BY KRISTE MENCHER

As the demand for quality education increases and the ideal that all students should receive an education commensurate with their abilities grows, many parents in California have exercised their option to apply for Gifted Magnet Programs. Throughout the State of California, school districts are giving parents another choice for their children's education. Sometimes coupled with voluntary integration programs, magnet programs offer students the opportunity to experience a more in-depth course of study in an integrated environment.

Long Beach Unified School District created schools within a school at elementary and secondary levels to accommodate gifted and talented students. Long Beach Unified has 13 elementary schools, 6 middle schools and 2 high schools offering this option to parents. All of these schools are very popular. At the secondary level, transportation is available to the students. They also have a Bilingual/GATE program at the elementary level and will have one at the middle school level in the 1997-98 school year.

The Los Angeles Unified School District has 13 elementary school magnets, 11 middle school magnets, and 1 high school magnet for gifted/high ability students. In addition, there are 3 highly gifted elementary magnets, 1 highly gifted middle school magnet, and 1 highly gifted high school magnet. All of these magnet programs are part of the voluntary integration program of the district. Students of high ability, not necessarily state-identified gifted, comprise part of the student body at some of these programs. Furthermore, Los Angeles has 100 other magnet programs, with specialties in business, enriched studies, fine arts, foreign language, humanities, math/science/technology, and medical careers. Many parents of gifted children choose to apply to these programs of interest also.

Sacramento Unified School District has five BASIC/GATE centers. The BASIC section of these schools is under integration guidelines; the GATE portion is not. Criteria for selection to the GATE program is based on State-identification and application. These GATE programs are schools within schools. Sacramento Unified has also implemented a program called EXCEL which provides opportunities for underrepresented minorities who show potential but are not State identified.

Magnet schools nurture the brightest and often the most motivated students across the state. Although many are specialized, focusing on a particular area of interest or achievement such as mathematics or performing arts, other magnet programs adopt a holistic approach, focusing on the whole child.

Magnet programs provide a crucial model for improving the education of all students, not merely the gifted and talented ones. Students enjoy an advanced learning program which emphasizes hands-on learning, fosters critical and creative thinking, promotes both self-reliance and a concern for others, and instills a sense of joy and excitement about learning. As Lisa Jeffrey wrote, "The [California] thinking curriculum incorporates components previously described as appropriate for gifted and talented learners." ("Gifted Education Politics: School Reform," *Communicator*, Fall, 1996)

Why are magnet programs successful? Students are challenged. Members of the school community collaborate on decisions about curriculum, instructional strategies, and school organization. Teachers chosen for their enthusiasm, dedication, and excellence work closely together to enhance the curriculum. Parents assume an active role in interviewing and hiring prospective teachers and budget decisions; parents are often the driving force to effect change for their magnet school in a myriad of bureaucracy.

Enrollment at magnet schools or centers is generally smaller than that of a traditional or neighborhood school which allows for more personal contact. Attendance and participa-

tion in school activities are often higher. The school environment is conducive to academic excellence.

Demand for seats in magnet programs is high; there is often a long waiting list. Many families are willing to make personal sacrifices to accommodate travel time and distance.

Graduating students are well prepared for postsecondary education. The drop out rates are lower in magnet programs and the test scores higher. Students, parents, and teachers are proud of the programs and the results. The collaboration of parents, teachers, and students creates a successful partnership in education. ■

KRISTE MENCHER is the Coordinator at Portola Highly Gifted Middle School Magnet, Los Angeles Unified School District.

To qualify for a highly gifted magnet program, applicants must have a minimum IQ score of 150 (plus or minus five points) on an individual intelligence test administered by the LAUSD Psychological Services Branch. Located in Tarzana, Portola is the only highly gifted middle school magnet for students in grades 6-8. Magnet capacity is 244 students. Walter Reed Middle School in Studio City also offers an Independent Honors Program for highly gifted students which is not part of the magnet program.

Future CAG Conferences

February 27–March 1, 1998
Anaheim Hilton and Towers

March 5–7, 1999
The Westin Hotel and Santa Clara Convention Center

March 3–5, 2000
The Century Plaza, Century City

March 2–4, 2001
The Hyatt Regency Hotel and Sacramento Convention Center

March 1–3, 2002
Wyndham Palm Springs Hotel and Convention Center

Samples of Magnet School Screening Activities

Applicants to gifted/high ability magnets in the Los Angeles Unified School District do not have to be State-identified gifted. In order to be eligible, applicants may meet any one of the three criteria:

1. **Be identified as gifted by an LAUSD school psychologist in the intellectual, high achievement, specific academic, or creative ability categories.**

   or

2. **Have national stanine scores of 7, 8, or 9 on standardized achievement tests in both total reading and total math.**

   or

3. **Demonstrate the ability to meet ALL FOUR of these critical-thinking and problem-solving skills in their primary language:**
   - **Explain meaning or relationships among facts, information, or concepts that demonstrate depth and complexity.**
   - **Formulate new ideas or solutions and elaborate on the information.**
   - **Use alternative methods in approaching new or unfamiliar mathematical problems.**
   - **Use extensive vocabulary easily and accurately to express creative ideas or demonstrative creative ideas nonverbally.**

Choices brochure
Los Angeles Unified School District

Eleven of the elementary school programs begin in the first grade. In order to assess whether applicants meet the four high ability criteria, many gifted program coordinators have developed different tasks to help teachers screen students who are not in a gifted/high ability program. Applicants who do not meet the criteria are not eligible for selection.

Several of the activities used to screen applicants are also appropriate for screening students for State-identification as gifted.

Euclid Gifted/High Ability Bilingual Magnet

Euclid Gifted/High Ability Bilingual Magnet, Grades 1–5, is in the Boyle Heights area of Los Angeles. Euclid offers a differentiated instructional program in both Spanish and English. Program capacity is 379. The magnet program coordinator Vicki Siegel is the former educator representative from the Mission Region and often works with Dr. Sandra Kaplan in providing workshops and demonstration lesson on differentiated instruction. She was also co-author and illustrator of *The Flip Book* (Sandra N. Kaplan, Bette Gould and Vicki Siegel, Educator to Educator, 1995) and had her work included in *Systems: A Thematic Interdisciplinary Unit* (Kaplan and Gould, Educator to Educator, 1994). To help assess applicant eligibility, Vicki suggests that teachers use several different tasks including:

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TASK #1

Objective:

The student will continue an existing pattern.

Procedure:

The teacher creates a pattern using attribute blocks. Suggested patterns include AB-AB-AB..., ABA-ABA-ABA..., ABB-ABB-ABB...

Time:

Six minutes

TASK #2

Objective:

Given a set of attribute blocks, the child will combine blocks to create his/her own pattern.

Procedure:

Teacher creates a pattern (ABB-ABB...). The teacher asks the student, "What is my pattern?" "How do you know?"

Teacher then instructs the child to make and identify his/her own pattern.

Older children should be encouraged to create more complex patterns.

Time:

Six minutes

Welby Way Gifted/High Ability Magnet

Located in the northwest San Fernando Valley, Welby Way Gifted/High Ability Magnet, Grades 2–5, has a magnet capacity of 320 students. The

The Von Trapp children are introduced to their new governess, Maria, in *The Sound of Music*. Welby Way Gifted/High Ability Magnet, 1996.

eleven teachers and coordinator organize a monthly dinner meeting to plan curriculum. Performing arts is an integral part of the instructional program at the magnet. Fourth and fifth grade students performed selections from *The Sound of Music* as the Von Trapp Family during the 1996 CAG Conference.

Some of the activities that Molly Schroeder recommends to screen students are:

Criterion:

Formulate new ideas or solutions and embellish information.

Student Activity:

Read to students.

The early people who came to America a long time ago were called Pilgrims. Life then was very different than it is today. They cut down trees to build their own houses. They hunted for food and grew all of their own agriculture. Their drinking water came from streams. They made their clothes out of hand woven materials.

Ask students to name some things that they can do now that Pilgrim children could never do.

Criterion:

Use alternative methods in approaching new or unfamiliar mathematical problems.

Student Activities:

1. A family has two dogs and two cats. Each dog eats one can of food per day. Each cat eats one half of a can per day. How much food would the family have to buy to feed their pets for one week?
2. A class of 33 students has a pizza party. There are five pizzas for the whole class. Each pizza is cut into eight pieces. Show how the pizzas could be shared fairly among the students. Draw a picture to show your answer.
3. Complete the pattern: 1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 21, , ,
4. Jamie is taller than Dale. Nina is shorter than Dale. Jamie is shorter than Brad. Draw a picture to show who is taller.

Criterion:

Uses large vocabulary easily and accurately to express creative ideas or demonstrate creative ideas non-verbally.

Student Activity:

Read several paragraphs to students. Ask students to create a detailed illustration the passage read.

Canterbury Gifted/High Ability Magnet

Judy Hall is the coordinator of Canterbury Gifted/High Ability Magnet in Arleta. Her lesson plan for teaching compound words appeared in the spring 1997 issue of the *Communicator*. Some of her ideas will also be featured in Angel Barrett's next book, *A Practical Guide to Differentiating the Curriculum*, Royal Fireworks Press, anticipated 1998.

TASK #1

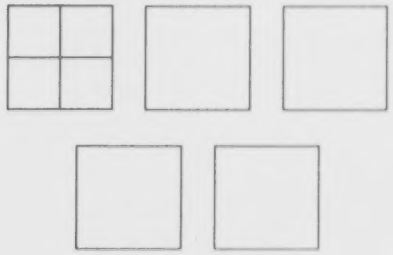
Students are fascinated with the alphabet from an

early age. A game to be played with young children is to have them say the alphabet, close their eyes and say the alphabet, say the alphabet skipping every other letter, say the alphabet backwards and the ultimate challenge, saying the alphabet backwards skipping every other level.

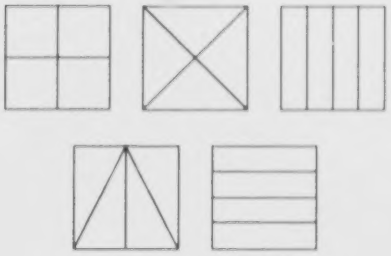
TASK #2

Divide squares into fourths. Draw a series of boxes and invite students to divide the squares into fourths as many different way as possible. Traditional approaches include: columns, window panes, pinwheels, horizontal lines. This task encourages fluency and originality.

Sample:



Sample completion:



TASK #3

Tell the students a story about the five chickens (below) looking for their own home. Using only two squares, give each chicken its own yard.

Story Drawing:

Solution:

Wolves

Demonstration Lesson
Eagle Rock Gifted/High Ability Magnet

BY ANGEL BARRETT

Objectives:

- Students will brainstorm what they know and what they want to know about wolves.
- Students will use different research materials to confirm their knowledge and to answer questions using the group investigation model.
- Students will note descriptive words or phrases on post-it notes for charting and future reference.

Students at Eagle Rock Gifted/High Ability Magnet use the group investigation model to research information on wolves. Pictured are Josh Gandela, fourth grade, Chelsea Tacub, fourth grade, Ronnie Castillo, fourth grade, Jeanette Aames, third grade, and Phoebe Minette, third grade.

Materials:

- "What am I?" from *Quiz Me! Query Me!* (A.J. Barrett , Royal Fireworks Press)
- yellow post-it notes
- Chart: What we know/What we want to know
- Marking pen
- Group recording sheets
- Group copies of selected research materials such as:
  - *Discovering Wolves: A Nature Activity Book* by Nancy Field and Corliss Karasov (Dog-Eared Publications in cooperation with Timber Wolf Alliance)
  - *Gray Wolf, Red Wolf* by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent

(Clarion Books)

- *Red Wolf Country Youth Book*, by Jonathan London (Wolf Haven International)
- *The Wonder of Wolves* by Sandra Chisholm Robinson (Denver Museum of Natural History in cooperation with Roberts Rinehart, Inc. Publishers)
- *Wild, Wild Wolves* by Joyce Milton (Random House)
  Wolf by Maureen Greely (Michael Friedman Publishing Group, Inc.)
- *Wolf Haven Teacher's Curriculum*, Wolf Haven International
- *Wolf Pack: Tracking Wolves in the Wild* by Sylvia A. Johnson and Alice Aamodt (Lerner Publications company)
- *WolfTracks* magazine for members of Wolf Haven International, 3111 Offut Lake Road, Tenino, WA 98589
- Excerpts from *WOLVES* teaching guide (Evan-Moore, Corp.)
- *Wolves* by Nancy Gibson (Wolf Haven International)
- *Wolves* by Betty Polisar Reigo (Scholastic, Inc.)
- *The Wolves of Yellowstone* (Wolf Haven International)
- "Wolves" from the World Book Encyclopedia
- *Zoobooks: Wolves*

Peter Haderlein, fourth grade, copies from the chart "What we want to know about wolves..." (*WOLVES* teaching guide, Evan-Moore, Corp., 1989)

Motivation

Begin with "What I am?" *from Quiz Me! Query Me!*, a book of Science Quick Quizzes.

After students have guessed what animal the narrative is describing, ask them to point out which clues helped them determine the answer. Write descriptive words or phrases on yellow post-it notes and stick to chart.

My life exemplifies the cultural conflict of the New World. Native Americans lived in harmony with me. They recognized my importance in nature's life cycle and honored me in dances and stories. European settlers disrupted this harmony to build their cities and to clear land for crops and domesticated animals such as cattle and sheep.

As early as the 1600s, settlers declared war on me and offered a bounty for my pelt. The newcomers saw me as vicious and evil. True, I am regarded as one of nature's most successful hunters because of the wide range of habitats in which I can survive. However, I rarely kill more than I can eat, and there is no record of any healthy member of my species attacking a human. Conversely, I am shy and prefer to avoid people whenever possible.

Persecution has killed off many species of my family and there are only two subspecies, canis lupus and canis rufus, which exist in the lower 48 states. Although acknowledged as a missing vital element in the natural balance of Yellowstone National Park, ranchers continue to fight my recent reintroduction into the area.

In many ways my life resembles that of the human extended family. The African proverb 'It takes a village to raise a child," could be rewritten to say 'It takes a pack to raise a litter.'

What am I?

Excerpt from *Quiz Me! Query Me!* by A. J. Barrett, Royal Fireworks Press, 1996

Whole Group Lesson

Begin brainstorming by asking students what they know about wolves. Chart responses on the left side of the chart. (*WOLVES* teaching guide, Evan-Moore, Corp., 1989).

Continue asking students what they would like to know about wolves.

If students do not generate the following questions, teachers may wish to add some of them.

1. How do social and familial relationships among wolves compare with those of humans? (Analysis)
2. Why do you think wolves are often hunted for bounties and considered villains even in literature ("Little Red Riding Hood," "Three Little Pigs")? (Hypothesis - Synthesis)
3. Summarize the Native Americans' relationship with the wolf. (Knowledge/Comprehension)
4. How do the Native Americans' opinion differ from that of the settlers? the farmers? (Analysis)
5. What would happen if wolves were to become extinct? (Prediction - Synthesis)

Students use post-it notes on a Venn diagram to compare and contrast a wolf and a dog. Chart is enlarged and modified from the *WOLVES* teaching guide, Evan-Moore, Corp., 1989. Pictured are Saul Corona, third grade, Emily Sipchen, fourth grade, and Melina Wyatt, fourth grade.

Small Group Lesson

The purpose of group investigation is for each group to contribute their research to the group project. This goal may be accomplished either by having each group research a particular set of questions in which case the individual group may be given a set of all available reference material. The same goal may also be accomplished by having each group research all the questions and comparing what information different sources can provide. In this instance, each group would receive a different source with enough copies available of each book so that the students may read on their own or use a shared reading approach.

For this lesson, give each group a different resource. Each group may read their information to determine as much information about the questions as possible. Students may record their information on group stationery. Since this exercise is designed to be a shared reading and writing experience, students need to not only share information, but take turns recording their findings.

While students are reading, they may use post-it notes to record descriptive phrases or words that will later be used for vocabulary development.

Clarity Guerra, fourth grade, Niki Sapin, third grade, Peter Haderlein, fourth grade, and Jonathan Lee, fourth grade, engage in a group discussion on wolves.

Whole Group Lesson

Individual groups report their research back to the entire class.

Class evaluates original notes on the "What we know about wolves" side of the chart.

This method allows students to self-correct any incorrect perceptions.

Class documents findings on both sides of the chart. Students may give particular references such as (*Zoobooks: Wolves*, p. 12).

Independent Lesson and Evaluation

Create a poem describing some aspect of the wolves' life or plight. (Synthesis)

Write a news item editorializing the controversy surrounding the protection of the gray wolf. You may choose either side. (Evaluation)

ANGEL BARRETT has just been selected as assistant principal, Plummer Elementary School, North Hills, California, Los Angeles Unified School District. She is *Communicator* Associate Editor for Curriculum.

Language of the Disciplines

Two Demonstration Lessons to Develop Mathematical Vocabulary
Welby Way Gifted/High Ability Magnet

Dictionary Digs

BY LINDA WEISSLER

Dictionary Digs is done every two or three weeks after students have about a list of approximately 20 vocabulary words related to a current topic or subject. The students are really eager to participate because they work in cooperative groups or with a partner. The groups compete to complete the project.

This lesson is designed to review geometry terms.

Materials

- A class set of identical dictionaries (If there are not enough dictionaries available, the activity may be setup as a learning center.)
- Worksheet (see page 41 for completed student answer sheet)

LINDA WEISSLER is a 4th-grade teacher at Welby Way Gifted/High Ability Magnet, Los Angles Unified School District.

Mathematically Speaking

BY ANGEL BARRETT

Test students' understanding of mathematical vocabulary with this BINGO game.

Language includes: centimeters, divisible, even number, factor, greater than, greatest common factor, least common multiple, less than, multiple, numerical equivalent, odd number, ordinal number, prime number, quarters, score.

Directions

Move quietly around the room and find one person who fits each description. The same person may not be used in more than one box.

Materials

Worksheet (see page 42)

ANGEL BARRETT has just been selected as assistant principal, Plummer Elementary School, North Hills, California, Los Angeles Unified School District. She is *Communicator* Associate Editor for Curriculum.

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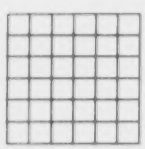
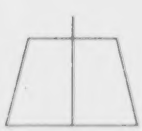
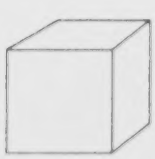
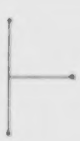
Name JOHN Partner's Name STEVE Date 6-2-97

Dictionary Digs

We have been exploring geometry by flipping, turning, sliding, and dealing with periods, shapes, lines, and points. Let's see if you and your partner can recall or locate the **geometry** terms. Read each definition; attempt to make an "educated guess." Then turn to the indicated page in your dictionary, carefully check each entry, and search for the correct **Word.**

Page	Definition	Educated Guess	**Word**	Illustration
572	having four equal sides and four right angles	SQUARE	SQUARE	
31	the measure of square units of a surface	AREA	AREA	
598	correspondence of opposite parts size, shape, and position	SIZE	SYMMETRY	
166	extending slantingly between opposite corners	DIAMETER	DIAGONAL	
147	a solid with six equal, square sides	HEXAGON	CUBE	
656	the point of intersection of the two sides of an angle	VERTEX	VERTEX	

Name _____ Date _____

Find someone who...

was born on a date that is a prime number	whose age is an odd number	whose weight is a multiple of three	was born in a city whose population is less than one million
who lives on a street that is an ordinal number	whose number of siblings is a factor of twelve	plays a sport that has quarters	whose height is less than 150 centimeters
was born in a month that is an even number	who has a phone number that is divisible by five	whose birthday is the least common multiple of four and five	was born in a year that is divisible by the greatest common factor of four and fourteen
who knows the numerical equivalent of four score and seven years ago	who has money in his/her pocket with a likeness of the 16th president	who can list all of the gifts received in the song *The Twelve Days of Christmas*	whose birthday is the greatest common factor of twelve and twenty

Coordinating a Community of Learners

BY VICKI WOEHRLE

Listen...You can hear them murmuring. The murmur turns into a soft roar. It's a small group, but they have a strong voice, both individually and as a whole. The gifted community is roaring: parents and other advocates for gifted students. Even if the school is not a magnet or a high ability center, staff still has an obligation to provide services in screening, identifying, and differentiating instruction to meet the needs of gifted students.

Unfortunately, many administrators do not run programs to the advantage of the gifted students because they don't see much advantage for the school as a whole. Although gifted students are considered Individuals With Exceptional Needs (IWENs) and gifted programs are state-funded, traditionally the focus has been on other programs. It's not easy to get people excited about a little bit of GATE money and a handful of students, especially with so much emphasis on special education, bilingual programs, school restructuring, and improving low test scores. Except for self-documentation on the Coordinated Compliance Review and the Program Quality Review, there is little demand for compliance.

So, what's all the roar? And where do they get this strength?

The Stakeholder Community

Parents and other advocates have every right to demand the best possible education for their children, no matter where in the range of students that they fall.

Administrators who have not yet seen the advantage of coordinating this community need to take a look at the pros and cons of this movement.

The cons are already in place. The cons include the lack of interest, effort, money, and desire. The cons can haunt a school when interested parents start leaving the home school and placing their children in other schools or magnet programs which have put effort into building their GATE programs. Losing high achieving students can offset school accountability scores and give schools an unfavorable reputation.

However, the pros can wield a lot of power. A strong GATE program encourages parental support, additional GATE funding, and can actually attract students from other schools.

A case in point is El Oro Way Elementary in Granada Hills, a small LEARN school in a suburb of the Los Angeles Unified School District. El Oro Way has a rather balanced student population consisting of different languages, ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds, Special Education, and traveling students who come from various areas of Los Angeles either through a desegregation program, Permits with Transportation (PWT), open enrollment, or as the result of overcrowded schools.

In four years, staff has increased the number of identified gifted students from 9 to over 40, approximately 10% of the total student population. Many of these students were identified gifted at another school and chose to come to El Oro Way because of the school's gifted program.

However, the most important reason to coordinate the community of learners is the fact that this coordination benefits all learners. By coordinating the efforts of each stakeholder group, staff can meet the needs of individuals and improve achievement for all learners.

Community Web

Each stakeholder group can be brought into a web with the gifted program at the center. Even if the school has only a small number of identified gifted students, the web and the program can grow together.

The community web includes:

- **Teachers.** Teachers who are willing to participate are a vital component of the community web even if they don't have any identified gifted students. Certainly all teachers who have identified gifted students in their classes should be included.
- **Parents.** In addition to parents of GATE students, often there are parents with special skills or a parent preparing for a teaching career that can be recruited to provide enrichment and support.
- **Staff.** The entire staff including paraprofessionals, office staff, food service workers, and the plant manager are all part of the team. As all stakeholders become empowered with effective decision making, all stakeholders hold a higher respect for student outcomes.
- **Alumni.** Middle school and high school students love to return to their elementary school for visits and involvement. When the local secondary school has minimum or pupil-free days, GATE alumni can make special or regular visits.
- **Local University.** The school can utilize teacher prepared-

ness programs with both professors and college students.
- **Community.** The school can develop special relationships with local merchants, adopt-a-school programs, grandparents, etc.

How the community of stakeholders is utilized is an open-ended question. Ideas can be generated in brainstorming sessions where all the stakeholder groups are present. Nearly all stakeholders can participate in program planning and team-teaching enrichment classes. Although pull-out programs are an option, students miss activities in the regular classroom. If a pull-out program is taught by a member of the faculty, other teachers may need to absorb the instructor's students into their classrooms, and the question arises as to what the receiving teacher will do with these students. At El Oro Way, several differed models were tested. What worked best for the schools was for students to arrive at the receiving teacher's classroom with their own assignments, for visiting students to serve as cross-age and peer tutors, and for the entire school to participate in an enrichment program scheduled at the same time as the GATE pull-out program.

"For all stakeholders the foundation of the bridge is a shared vision."

After-school programs might involve organizing stakeholder groups who can share the teaching responsibilities in order not to overburden any one person.

In no case should an enrichment program be considered a substitute for providing differentiated instruction in the core curricular areas.

One year El Oro Way renamed the gifted pull-out program the Enrichment Facilitation Group (EFG). The EFG program planning for that year was designed to bring enrichment to the entire school.

Some EFG classes created products that could be used by the entire school on a regular basis such as student-authored books for the school library, student-designed learning centers in all academic areas which could be checked out by the faculty, and polyhedraville models to be used in teaching integrated math and geometry.

Other EFG classes produced special activities and products to be enjoyed by the entire school such as four full-house productions of the musical *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, a healthy heart assembly, an art-work gallery, and a published magazine depicting schoolwide activities, special events, and teacher profiles.

Although the classes were facilitated by adults, the students created these products and then shared them with other students.

Other activities which could involve all stakeholders include writing parent newsletters, coordinating weekend clubs, sharing experiences, assisting parents and teachers, conducting seminars and workshops, supporting professional development, donating goods and services, maintaining a professional library, assisting with paperwork, and making telephone calls.

Building the Bridge to Community Accountability

For all stakeholders the foundation of the bridge is a shared vision. The key words are say it, see it, show it, and be it.

Start by developing and sharing student and/or program outcomes. Visit the goals and outcomes frequently to remind stakeholders of the focus. Set a good example by being an enthusiastic pioneer. If experimenting or trying something new, remind everyone that some problems will need to be ironed out as the project progresses. Be motivated and willing to accept constructive criticism.

Time is a key component in building the bridge. The changes may occur slowly, gradually, in steps. The first year that El Oro Way used EFG, only half the staff and a handful of parents participated. The second year, 90% of the staff and 30 parents participated and contributed to the program in some way.

The rewards are phenomenal. As parental choice options increase, word-of-mouth and reputation attract parents of gifted and high achieving students to a well-organized program. The community bridge connects to many other areas of the school and helps to meet other student needs. The community of learners are satisfied with their increased involvement, empowerment, and enrichment.

Continual sharing enables all stakeholders to capture the vision and motivation for intrinsic satisfaction. El Oro Way is fortunate to have a principal, Juanita Manning, who recognized the importance and reward of supporting and empowering stakeholders, using a strong program as a public relations tool to promote the school, and recognizing achievement for all learners. Test scores are up. Enrollment keeps growing. The stakeholders are happy. The soft roar you hear are the kudos of satisfaction. ■

VICKI WOEHRLE has coordinated the Gifted and Talented Program at El Oro Way for four years, and is also a fifth grade teacher.

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WHAT NOW?

Continued from 1

parents as advocates. If you notice anything out of the ordinary about your children's behavior or performance, do not assume this is the normal response of all students to formal schooling or that they simply do not want to do the work. If your children are gifted, their behavior may be a cry for help.

Evaluating the School's Gifted Program

What can parents do to find out what a school is offering in curriculum and activities appropriate for gifted children? What kinds of questions can parents ask about encouraging and supporting the development of their children's talents? Here are some general guidelines you can follow.

One of the first steps is to locate sources and resources for your search. Contact state and national organizations for parents of gifted students. Also find out if there are any parent groups in your area. They may be able to inform you about state and local policies and activities as well as opportunities for involvement. Next find out if there is an individual specifically responsible for gifted education in your children's school. This would be someone who initiates and develops programs either in or out of the classroom. The person may be called a gifted coordinator or he/she may be a teacher or member of the staff who has expertise in gifted education. Sometimes the gifted coordinator is the director of curriculum, the assistant superintendent, or assistant principal.

Examine the school's articulated goals and objectives for gifted children. Most districts at least have an official policy on gifted education, and this is a good place to begin. Once you know the wording of this policy, you can then explore how your children's school puts it into practice. How does the school identify gifted students? Do services for the gifted function on the basis of standardized testing or on multiple criteria?

Next inquire what kinds of interventions the school has developed for bright and talented children. Are gifted children pulled out of class for special activities? If so, what sorts of projects or activities do the students do? How often does this occur and with what level of success? Does the school offer after-school or weekend programs? If the school does not use either of these, what strategies do teachers employ in class to meet the needs of high-achieving students? Specifically look for practices such as clustering, compacting, and individualized education programs that attempt to reach the needs of gifted children in the regular classroom.

Clustering allows high-achieving students in a classroom to work together on specific assignments or projects—an effective alternative to cooperative learning for gifted children, who often have the most to lose in group activities. In *compacting*, children who demonstrate mastery in certain areas of the curriculum can automatically move on to new material or to challenging, alternative projects. *Individualized educational programs* are courses of study uniquely suited to each child's talents and interests. Any of these practices can occur in the regular classroom and, if done effectively, will meet the unique educational needs of your children for assignments that demand imagination, higher level thinking, and creative problem-solving. Two books that will help you understand how these strategies work in the regular classroom and how effectively they function in your children's classroom are: *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom* by Susan Winebrenner and *Teaching Young Gifted Children in the Regular Classroom* by Joan Smutny, Sally Walker, and Betty Meckstroth. Both volumes offer a variety of strategies, activities, and materials for teachers to use with gifted students.

Communicate with People Who Can Help You

The people who can help you the most are your own children. Explore solutions to your children's school difficulties *with them*. Ask them what they would like to do with their time at school if they could. What subjects would they study? What projects would they do? Then ask them to think about their school day. Try to get as many specifics as possible (not just general comments like "it's so boring" or "I hate math"). What is it that makes them feel bored? Why do they find it hard to pay attention? What would make them like their classes better?

Once you have gained a clearer picture of the situation from your children's point of view, you may want to network with other parents of gifted students. A parent group would be ideal, but if one is not available, your children may be able to tell you which other students in the class perform at their level. The wisdom in this is that other parents may have insights and experiences that will help guide your own communications with the teacher. The last thing you want to do is make the teacher feel criticized or unappreciated—a situation that will only increase your children's difficulties in the classroom. Here are a few guiding principles when you communicate with the teacher:

- present yourself as a teacher advocate as well as a gifted-child advocate;
- show that you understand

the daily pressures and responsibilities a teacher has with a full class of active children;

- state your purpose calmly and matter-of-factly, knowing that some teachers assume parents of gifted to be overly concerned or even a little hysterical;
- make it clear you are not requesting special treatment for your children but are simply seeking ways to meet their educational needs;
- present yourself as a partner—someone willing to play an active role in working out alternatives, not someone who is asking the teacher to spend a lot of extra time on your children.

In this way, you stand a better chance of creating a healthy partnership with your children's teacher. As you become more familiar with this teacher, your children's daily activities, and also the strategies commonly used with gifted students in the regular classroom (e.g., compacting, clustering, etc.), you will feel freer about suggesting alternative activities or other ways to schedule their time.

Share your children's interests and talents with the teacher. The better the teacher knows your gifted children, the more equipped he/she will be to create more challenging activities in areas where they have already demonstrated competency. Once you have established a partnership with the teacher, stay in communication, especially when your children tell you they are enjoying school more or are excited about some activity or project the teacher assigned. Teachers need to hear when things are working!

While the teacher is perhaps the most important figure in your communications with the school, you should also talk to other officials to see what else the district offers for gifted students. For example, pull-out, after-school, or Saturday programs may provide talented children with classes or activities that involve higher levels of critical and creative thinking and a richer variety of subjects than teachers can consistently offer in the regular classroom. If the school has not identified your children for a program like this, find out what the requirements are. Many gifted students slip through the cracks when schools use test scores as the only measure of ability. Districts have become increasingly more sensitive to this issue; if yours has not, talk to an administrator at the district level and voice your concerns. Present evidence of your children's talent and explain the practical need for multiple indicators of talent.

Create a Plan Uniquely Suited to Your Children's Needs

You will soon discover that one program will not sufficiently meet *all* the educational needs of your gifted children. Reviewing the challenges her gifted daughter had in school, Katherine Sawicz devised a plan that combined a range of strategies and scheduling options for gifted children (1997). Experts under various titles may recommend particular solutions—a gifted school, pull-out programs, or in-class alternatives. However, as Sawicz points out, integrating methods will enable you as a parent to capitalize on the different strengths of these options and maximize their effectiveness for your children.

Consider some of the following ideas:

Compacting the curriculum. Perhaps nothing is more difficult for gifted children than sitting through long periods of repetition. Talk to the teacher about the possibility of pre-testing your children out of content they already know. This will free them for more challenging projects they develop on their own (or with the teacher) or for more advanced assignments in specific content areas being studied by the rest of the class. As Susan Winebrenner eloquently points out, there should be little concern about questions other children might raise about a gifted student working independently. When the teacher clearly states the criteria for compacting and offers this option to the entire class, no one asks why some students are doing different things during part of the class period (1992: 17). Through compacting, gifted students in Winebrenner's classes were able to buy back free time for alternative projects, and this rescued them from the boredom and monotony that stifles so many talented children in the regular classroom.

Independent learning. If your children's teacher does not practice compacting, try to at least set up a system that enables your children to work independently at certain times in the day or week. Explore the possibility with the teacher of allowing the children to go to a learning center or library to work on specific projects that interest them. To facilitate this, you could create a simple form that lists options (projects or assignments your children want to pursue) and some means for communicating to the teacher what they accomplished. The teacher could agree that at those times when your children have finished their work early or when they pre-test out of content he/she plans to teach on a particular day, they can go to the library or learning center to work independently. Express a willingness to work with the teacher on different ways to structure this opportunity. If you become involved in this process, your children's teachers will feel more secure knowing that another adult is monitoring an alternative they might ordinarily find risky.

Clustering. Gifted children sorely need association with other talented students. Working with others of similar abilities enables them to feel less isolated as well as more challenged by the opportunity to collaborate with other high achievers. If your children's teachers do not practice clustering, talk to them about the possibility, particularly in the context of group learning activities. These activities can be simple—working together on a computer, finishing a math assignment in a small group, or creating an art display. Even short experiences with other gifted children will make yours feel

more enthused about their learning and less like isolated anomalies.

Options Outside the Classroom

Programs. Ask the curriculum director, gifted coordinator, or principal about programs sponsored by universities or institutes for the gifted. If they do not have any information, then contact local university education departments. University-sponsored gifted programs do exist and are flourishing. My own Center for Gifted at National-Louis University administers programs for children pre-school to grade 10 and offers weekend options during the school year as well as summer workshops. Do not underestimate the value of these as supplements for your children's school activities, especially if the programs include creative as well as academic subjects. The teachers in university-sponsored programs are knowledgeable about the needs of gifted students as well as experts in their fields. I have seen many children blossom under the mentoring relationships these educators quickly develop with talented students. They are valuable sources of enrichment and growth for your gifted children and can aid you in locating other mentors and teachers for the future.

Mentoring. Inquire at the school or district about mentoring possibilities for your children. In addition to the school, check other sources for the gifted—education departments at universities, gifted institutes at the state or national level, parent groups, community centers, or specialized schools. They may be able to connect you with professionals in fields where your children have a special talent and interest. The personal attention given a child by an accomplished professional can be instrumental in setting his/her sights on greater possibilities for the future.

Homeschooling. In addition to spending some time with your child after school or on weekends, you may consider a version of homeschooling that Sawicz found beneficial for her daughter. She petitioned the principal of her child's school to spend one morning a week at home to work on independent projects. She tailored learning activities in chemistry, math, and other subjects to her daughter's unique abilities, interests, and needs. The flexible learning environment enabled her daughter to be more creative and original in her thinking about the subjects she studied and restored her enthusiasm about learning. One morning a week, wrote Sawicz, was "just enough home schooling to allow her the freedom to be herself, to affirm her beliefs in herself, and to go back to school refreshed and ready to use these skills in another setting" (1997). A midweek break from their daily routine can make an enormous difference for gifted students who feel imprisoned by the rigid schedule of formal schooling.

Evaluate Your Plan

Your children's responses to the plan you have created together will quickly tell you how it is working. Stay in touch both with your child and the teacher so that you can solve problems together when they arise. Notice your children's behavior. Do they want to go to school? Is there a desire to work with other gifted children on independent projects? Does your son or daughter come home saying things like, "I always wanted to write free verse poetry; I must have written at least three of them this afternoon. I'm going to do a writing journal. Can we talk about it? I'll read the poems to you when I'm done." Comments like these are signs of a gifted child who feels alive to the possibilities of learning. Look for these signs.

In closing, never underestimate the difference that you can make as a parent. No one knows your children as you do. No one has the same sensitivity to their needs when they express them or, more importantly, when they do not. No one else has the same determination to protect them from harm or the kind of motivation and energy it takes to seek the most supportive learning environments that will nurture their abilities. Sawicz speaks from experience when she writes:

> Parents do make a difference. Parents do know their children and need to be keenly aware of their needs. Gifted children do have special needs that must be met to provide them with opportunities for real growth. We need to work toward the development of positive and enriching environments for our children, both within the school system and at home. It can be done, as long as we, as parents, remember to never give up, and to use our own knowledge and creativity to provide our gifted children with environments unique to their talents and needs (1997). ■

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What do you think? What have you done to make a difference for your gifted students or your children? Let others know. Send your thoughts and/or ideas to the Communicator editor, vckib@aol.com.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ASSESSMENT

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in the real world. With a focus on individual student progress, students should be better able to move at their own pace and in their own unique way than was possible with more traditional methods. This is tremendously important for gifted students.

Creating Student Portfolios

One performance assessment strategy that allows students to accumulate evidence of content mastery at their own pace and in their own unique way is the development of a student portfolio. The student portfolio allows students to take more responsibility for their own learning and have more choice and flexibility in how that learning will be demonstrated than could be possible with paper and pencil testing. Because of the focus on the purpose for learning, students can devise unique ways to share what they have learned. Student portfolios that focus on high performance behaviors assess all products against **eight descriptors**:

- presentation of an idea that is unusual;
- presentation of an idea that is complex;
- presentation of an idea that is organized to communicate effectively;
- work that is advanced beyond the age or grade level;
- understanding of a problem or idea in-depth;
- use of material that is resourceful and/or clever;
- evidence of research support; and
- evidence of high interest and perseverance.

A **design** for a successful portfolio includes:

- An explicit explanation of the purposes of the portfolio so that learners know what is expected of them before they begin developing their evidence.
- Evidence that establishes a correspondence between academic course work and their experience.
- Multiple sources of evidence to show competency and/or mastery.
- Evidence that shows a direct correspondence with the concepts being learned and classroom instruction.
- Evidence of growth and change in the learner over time. The portfolio should contain a variety of self-selected student work at various points in learning as opposed to a sampling of only the student's best work.
- Student choice of evidence and a self-evaluation of that evidence as part of student ownership.
- A multipurpose nature so that the portfolio can be used for more than a single assignment or course.

A portfolio should have at least **three distinct parts**:

1. **Purposes** - Explicit statements of essential purposes give direction to the data collection. Each piece of evidence must demonstrate progress toward a purpose. Barton and Collins suggest a limit of five stated purposes per class.
2. **Evidence** - This can include documents produced during the completion of course work, documents about typical events in the work of the student, documents produced by others about the work of the student, and documents prepared especially for the portfolio. It is suggested that goal statements, reflective statements or summary of material to show growth, and statements telling why this evidence was appropriate to the goals and purposes be included. Documents can be notes, journal entries, drawings, photographs, audio and video tapes, models, and computer discs.
3. **Assessment Criteria** - Such criteria can be developed in at least two areas: technical, compliance with the criteria for the development of a portfolio; and substance, how well the student met the purposes and goals. The success of students' efforts and the accuracy of teachers' assessments of these efforts depend heavily on the initial clarity of the stated purposes.

The **teacher's role** in performance assessment:

- specify the essential knowledge important for the students to learn in the field of study.
- communicate to students the goals of each lesson and unit of study.
- use assessment continuously to inform and strengthen the planning and delivery of the learning experience.
- use a variety of assessment strategies including functional assessment and performance assessment
- find usable ways to demonstrate essential knowledge.
- link what is taught within and across courses so that the students' portfolios become reflective of the purposes and goals of the program.
- teach the skills of self-assessment and give opportunities for their use.

While these tasks are not easy, the promise for involving students in real and meaningful growth and optimal learning more than make such efforts worthwhile. For students who are gifted, alternative assessment provides an avenue to far more accurate and meaningful evaluation of their learning than do any of the more traditional methods now in use. The student becomes a motivated partner in the learning and evaluation process. Alternative assessment strategies show great promise for gifted students as with these methods for recording their continuous progress, they can better contribute to the growth of their own knowledge and skills. ■

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BARBARA CLARK, Ph.D. is a professor of education at California State University at Los Angeles, and past president of CAG and NAGC. Dr. Clark is also the author of *Growing Up Gifted*.

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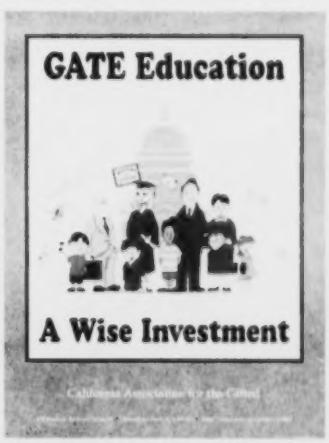

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YOUNGEST TALENTS

Continued from 21

the early grades. An evaluation of the problems and associated abilities should include an assessment of each child's intrinsic intellectual abilities and talents. Early reading does not define giftedness. Cleverness with numbers at an early age is not necessarily the key to a distinguished future. Certainly behaving beautifully and earning A's is a washout in this regard, and perceptual disabilities only serve to disguise, not illuminate, many extraordinary talents.

I am not referring to a large group here. Many of the more difficult children fall easily into other groupings and require the specialized services most schools are required by law to provide. Others in this small group cause few behavior problems, though their identification is equally chancy and should be seriously addressed as well. However, my concern here is that child who aggressively confronts the experience of learning and demands a response. He/she is not going to take learning lying down. If the environment of learning doesn't suit, this child will attempt to alter it to meet his/her intellectual demands. They will argue, resist, insist on discussions of the matter at hand, do naughty things deliberately, and generally aggravate unresponsive teachers to distraction. They follow their teachers with the same persistence and barrage they inflict on their parents. Unfortunately, the results are not so sanguine. Keep in mind that the underachieving gifted started somewhere, turned off early, and were frequently unrecognized in the lower elementary grades.

On the other hand, they do share one commonality with their less demanding peers. They are remarkably vulnerable and sensitive beneath their cloak of precocious appearance. I once arranged for a six-year-old to take World Regions with a ninth grade class[5], but the work was done with me. This is the same little girl who was paralyzed at the thought of joining open play during the first month of school. She broke down in tears when she couldn't draw a horse that looked like a horse, which I solved by putting her beside the nephew of a puppeteer for Sesame Street Productions who could outdraw us all. He did horses, cows, or whatever for Jacquenette and she helped him work with his visual perceptual reading problems. It can be very hard for children so deviant from the norm to make friends, share time, and relax into the casual play of childhood. Fortuitously, Stephen's popularity also served to draw Jacquenette into the world of childhood in a way she could safely accept. She even watched Sesame Street on the Friday evenings when one of Stephen's puppets, made with his aunt at the London Studio, put in an appearance. The serendipity in all this was the joy of resolving Stephen's behavior problems.[6] Once he was helping a child seen by everyone as so rare as to be almost untouchable, he turned into the sunshine of our classroom and worked with remarkable intensity on his reading difficulties. Meanwhile, Jacquenette was going to lunch with girlfriends by the year's end.

Matthew is presently studying earthquakes, one of which devastated his Kobe home. He says he "needs to understand why everything fell down." We also need to know why things fall down for some of our brightest entrants. The beginning years are the stuff upon which a gifted future is built. If this means more intensive vigilance in the beginning years of school, so be it. These are not children we can afford to lose. We might even discover that our underachieving gifted and turned off talents are a product of our own device. They come equally from all parts of the population. They exist in our midst as flowers of special fragrance. Many do not have parents who know or understand what blooms before their eyes. It is not up to them to make sense of school for their children, it is up to us to find and nurture them on their behalf. Matthew's mother is up front and there for him. As educators, we need to be up front and there for all of them. They too have very special needs. I do not question the one-to-one instruction which accompanies a severely disabled child around our campus. I do question the fact that ed-

ucation does not afford this privilege to those equally fragile at the other end of education's spectrum. ■

1 Winner, E. (1996). *Gifted children, Myths and realities*, BasicBooks, Harper Collins, Inc.
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4 DreamWorks Company, Hollywood, CA.
5 The high school history teacher volunteered his time to assess her geographic abilities and set up the program. He came down once a week to monitor our progress and graded her work along with that of his own classes.
6 Stephen was subsequently identified as highly gifted in artistically creative areas to include the ability to synthesize and create new ways of representing ideas. In response to a thinking lesson on creating new playground equipment for his class, he designed floppy mushrooms, which one could jump on, hide under, pull down, and bounce across. The following summer, his mother and friends helped him construct these in the back gardens. I would add that the report which followed him into first grade from his kindergarten year suggested something considerably at odds with this identification.

SYDNEY TYLER-PARKER is a staff member at Laguna Salada Union School District, CA and the author of *Curriculums to Teach Thinking*.

RUNNING START

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ing myself, have opted for this alternative style of education. It is not for everyone, but no one program is.

I have experienced both pros and cons, but the pros have outweighed the cons. In most high schools you can begin the program in your junior year of high school. That means that by the time you graduate high school, you can have two years of college over with virtually free. You can go full-time at the college or part-time at the college and part time at the high school. I chose to go full-time at the high school.

The program allows for a free head start (and an idea of what college is like). You learn you have to discipline yourself because the teachers no longer have that responsibility. You don't get into trouble for skipping classes, but the instructors do not always allow make-ups for missed quizzes and tests, and absences can affect your grades. So there is more freedom in what you do with your time and what classes you take, but with freedom come choices and consequences.

Unless you tell them, your instructors will not know you are in *Running Start* and will treat you like everyone else. No special-treatment-you-are-in-college. You are taught what the instructor teaches and hear ideas, opinions, and points of view that high school teachers may not be able to discuss. I think this is good, and you always have the choice not to listen to these.

The only con I have experienced, and many will not, is loosing touch with the high school. When you don't attend the high school, it may be difficult to keep up with extra-curricular activities and friends. This isn't a huge drawback.

Coordinating what classes you need to take isn't that difficult. There is a *Running Start* counselor at the college and usually a designated one at the high school to help you out.

I have enjoyed the program thoroughly and am glad I was able to participate in it. If you can handle the responsibility, it is a good program.

Reyna Fransene graduated this June from East Valley High School in Spokane, Washington with 80 quarter college credits. She will start Evergreen University in the Fall just shy of junior status. She plans to pursue a career in occupational therapy after she completes her bachelors degree in liberal arts.

College Challenges the High School Mind

BY SCOTT KEMP

A thirteen year-old with a good mind and a passion for knowledge has a lot going for him. However, the doldrums of a the mechanized education found in the majority of public and even private schools can severely dampen a child's development. Such was the case for myself.

History of My Education

My education started early with my dedicated parents who saw that I was off to a good start. My first school of attendance was based on the educational philosophy known as "Montessori." This free and self-developing environment can be perfect for a motivated mind but virulent for the indolent child. I then proceeded into another private school where I spent third grade. A year later I

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found myself in Hollow Hills Elementary, a school for more gifted students. After completing sixth grade, I continued with the pre-fabricated education which I found in my junior high school. Here I sought more mental stimulation and wound up at Moorpark College for a summer course in electronics. The class was taught for people of my own age. After successfully completing the summer course, my professor suggested that I attend his college level class at night in the fall. I was permitted to take one course, as long as it didn't conflict with my junior high school education. These evening and summer courses continued for a year. That summer, in conjunction with guidance from both professors and administrators, I made my way to being a full time college student at the age of 14.

The Effects of College

The college environment has been overwhelmingly beneficial for me in many ways.

First, my rate of education doubled, finishing high school in two years instead of the usual four.

Secondly, the quality, wealth, and breadth of knowledge attainable at the college level is not only challenging, but also most interesting.

Finally, the most questioned "staple" of my schooling is that my social contacts, skills, and even participation all increased.

Currently, I have been attending for over two years. I have a double major, physics and computer science, and will be applying to schools such as Cal-Tech, Stanford, and MIT.

Benefits

My college career has brought me much further than I ever dreamed attainable. I have received an education unattainable in caliber to most people of my age. The college environment provides insight into many fields of interest which are not accessible in the regular high school environment. Hands-on experience and direct access to authorities on certain principals assist in understanding more complex concepts. I have also gained independence from the mold of the public school system.

The versatility of the college environment has allowed me to develop both educational and professional contacts for use in my future. In addition, I was able start my own business as a computer programmer and consultant, and I am currently the favored candidate for president of the Math, Engineering, and Science Association. These are extra-curricular activities that were possible, but not plausible, in high school. However, in the college environment, your resources in the way of knowledge and the ability to manage your own time and scheduling opens up many exciting possibilities.

Problems

Unfortunately, barriers arise when you diverge from the traditional road of classic education and travel down your own path.

Most colleges won't accept students as freshman without their high school degree. If you leave high school, it can be impossible to attain one. It is also difficult to apply to colleges after completing college level work. Colleges find this unfair to other students, and you must option to transfer.

I found it difficult adjusting to the demands of college curriculum, especially with the lack of required homework or assignments. A bright student can easily glide through high school with 'A' grades and yet invest very little time into homework or additional studying. In college the curriculum is such that you must apply yourself outside of the classroom. Moreover, transferring too early to a university or college that is too advanced may result in lack of necessary prerequisite course work. It is best to attend a junior college first.

In college you are financially responsible for education. Enrollment, books, and materials fees can be an unexpected expenses. In addition, it can be difficult to attain scholarships for college without a high school diploma or with the age discrepancy. Therefore, before leaving high school, do financial aide and scholarship research first. The number of scholarships available to high school students is far above that available to undergraduate college students.

These may be the least of your worries, but the lack of resources expected of adults and therefore college students can be hindering. For instance, accessibility to a car, license or state issued identification, financial stability, and more. These, even though small issues, can be frustrating to remedy. Depending on your class schedule, you may conflict with parents' time schedules or find it difficult to plan events with short notice. Sometimes you must depend on transportation from other sources such as friends or relatives.

Recommendation

Attending college at an early age can be beneficial, but only for the right student, one that is studious and can dedicate the time required for college with parental support and the resources required for college attendance. At times, even I think that college may not have been the wisest choice. I recommend that students complete high school, attending college in conjunction with high school. Taking courses beyond the scope of your high school requirements can disqualify you as a freshman in larger universities. Keep in mind that college is more expensive than high school by far. For this reason, attain as many scholarships as possible while still in high school. Do not try to attempt college if you find advanced placement or honors classes challenging enough. When you apply as a freshman to college, they must first sort the vast number of applicants via computer. Since the computers do not look at what school you went to and simply look at your GPA, it can often be more beneficial to have a 4.0+ from a high school than a 3.8 from a college.

Whatever your decision, tread carefully, and be sure to analyze to see if what you are doing is necessary. Always research the consequences of your actions. And remember these great words:

Never let your schooling interfere with your education.

–Mark Twain

SCOTT KEMP is a 16-year-old full-time student at Moorpark College with courses that emphasize science and math. He is no longer enrolled in high school. He plans to complete one more year at Moorpark before transferring to a university.

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CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

VOLUME 28, NO 4, FALL 1997

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

College and Beyond
Gifted students with disabilities can achieve.

Double Confusion
When a child is twice exceptional.

Education Online
One way to provide access for students with special needs.

Highly Gifted Students
Reports from the trenches by teachers who are there.

Looking Back
One special student provides her perspective on gifted education.

Honoring Our Ancestors
A way to celebrate the specialness of culture.

Our Son Did Not Come With an Instruction Book

The story of our search to help our gifted learning disabled,ADD son

BY SHEILA MOSKOWITZ

When my second child was born, I asked "Is the baby O.K.?" "Yes, yes," the nurse told me. "What is it?" I queried, sure that it would be a girl, as my older child, my only sibling and all her children were girls. "It's a boy!" the nurse declared. My first thought was, what do I do with a boy, I don't know how to raise a boy. Little did I know that his gender would be the least difficult of the challenges that lay ahead.

Though my son was an easygoing, happy baby, he had many allergies, and had sixteen ear infections in his first three years. He was not a candidate for tubes in his ears, as his infections cleared with antibiotics.

At age three, he entered nursery school for two mornings a week. He was a very friendly child, who was curious, inventive, and loved life. However, due to his ear infections, his speech was difficult to understand. As a speech therapist by profession, I knew our work was cut out for us. By age four, his language was quite understandable, even advanced for his age. However, now he was talking with many hesitancies and had difficulty thinking of words, even for common objects. I knew something was wrong with my boy, but I was not sure what. I took him to a colleague who specialized in stuttering. Her diagnosis was that he was not stuttering, but demonstrated advanced expressive and receptive vocabulary (almost two years ahead as assessed on several tests), and had difficulty choosing words among the many he already had at his disposal.

Armed with the information that my older daughter was gifted (having been tested in kindergarten), I searched for and selected an appropriate kindergarten for my son. Unfortunately, the teacher and curriculum were changed at the last minute. My son was so bored that he hid unfinished ditto sheets in his desk, stared out the window for hours, and turned ten-minute art projects into two-hour masterpieces. His teacher was upset and I apologized to my son for having to sit through a whole year of kindergarten. I taught him to read phonetically during the Christmas break. Strangely, he still had not

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LETTERS

Letters to the editor may be sent electronically to vckib@aol.com. We want to hear from you and to share your views with others.

Gifted Underachievers

I read with great interest Terrence W. Brown's article "The Growing Problem of Gifted Underachievers." [Spring 1997] My daughter scores high on intelligence tests and was identified gifted in the second grade. Her brother is seven years ahead of her in school and excelled at everything academic. He graduated valedictorian from high school and was accepted to a very prominent college. Her lack of performance in school was frustrating to us and her teachers. She seemed to be an underachiever, not trying.

I am a primary school teacher and have been taking classes about Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) to work with a few children identified with this disorder in my class. Many identifying characteristics fit my daughter. We have just had her tested and discovered that she has an auditory disability and has attention deficit disorder. The sad thing is she has just graduated from high school and this whole time we thought she was just an underachiever. The good thing is that now we know she is an underachiever because of these problems now being modified by medication and coping strategies. I'm glad we discovered this before college.

I wish Mr. Brown would have discussed the difference between ADD and underachieving. OR is there a difference. I would hate to think of another gifted child being told they aren't working or trying hard enough when they may have a real physical problem!

Vallorie Borchardt
Fresno, CA

Communicator

I really appreciate the new *Communicator.* For the first time, I've actually read it cover to cover. I found myself highlighting many of the articles - especially the one by Barbara Clark. Please continue to use this format for educating parents and teachers.

Clare Dusek, El Dorado High School

The *Communicator* quality is much improved! Keep up the good work!

Jackie Linn

Great new look. The *Communicator* is very appealing.

M. Olsen

Love the new *Communicator* format!

Ruth Wharton

Mirman School

Mrs. Mirman and I want to thank you for the comprehensive article about the Mirman School [Summer 1997] and the additional biographical materials relating to us personally. We appreciate both very much.

We would like to make one correction. While Mrs. Mirman and I will still be involved in the school, our daughter Leslie Mirman Geffen is now the Director of the school.

Norman J. Mirman

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Board Meetings are open to the public. If a meeting is scheduled in your area and you wish to attend, please call the CAG office for specific information.

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36th Annual Conference, California Association for the Gifted (CAG), "Reach for the Stars; Meet the Challenge." The Anaheim Hilton & Towers. Registration materials were mailed to members in September, 1997.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

MARGARET GOSFIELD

I have spent the major portion of my career teaching U.S. History to middle school students in both gifted and regular classes. In those history classes we always emphasized the contributions made by the great variety of people who came to our country and assisted in its development. Indeed, no other country in the history of the world has ever taken in so many different people—

- different in geographic origin
- different in ethnic and racial backgrounds
- different in religious and political beliefs

and joined them together as one people, as has the United States. Individuals from these diverse backgrounds came into the American "melting pot" where they learned and worked together and brought the country into the modern age.

Today, however there are serious concerns that our country is becoming more and more divided and stratified. There is evidence that resentment between people of different ethnic and racial backgrounds has increased in recent years in spite of the great strides made during the civil rights movement. There are also divisions between the rich and poor that education, or lack of it, accentuate or make pronounced.

In California the most compelling example of this division is in the controversy regarding the rejection of race and gender preferences in the ballot measure 209 and attempts to block its implementation. Arguments for and against state and local provisions for bilingual education demonstrate additional fracturing of society, as do the current welfare reform actions.

So, how does this relate to gifted education? If we are to solve our differences in a free and democratic society, we must have the best and brightest minds attending to them. The strength of American society has been in the education of its peoples and its ability to develop leadership and achievement in all areas of the country's activities whether they be in the arenas of science, economics, politics, social action, or aesthetic endeavor. If our country is to maintain a high level of achievement by, and economic well being for its citizens, it is imperative that we continue to encourage all individuals and groups to contribute at the highest levels possible.

Gifted education has long been labeled as "elitist" because a disproportionate number of the students identified and served come from white, middle and upper class families. Coordinators of gifted education know what a difficult task it is to find and serve underrepresented groups in the school population, and many of us have spent extraordinary amounts of time trying to carry out the task. Just when we think we have made progress in identifying a significant number of such children, we discover that their parents have moved elsewhere for economic or other reasons, and we are back at our starting point.

Difficult tasks, however, must not deter us from continuing our quest to identify and serve the special populations within our schools and communities. Gifted education in America has the important responsibility of seeking out and developing those individuals in all groups of our people who can be expected to provide the leadership and achievement to continue the tradition of greatness established over the course of our young country's history.

Of importance to California this school year will be the start of a three-year project entitled "Curriculum T.W.O." (Training Within Classrooms and On-line). The University of Southern California, in cooperation with the California Association for the Gifted and the California Department of Education, has been awarded a multi-year Javits Grant from the United States Department of Education for the purpose of developing academically challenging history-social science curriculum for gifted English Language Learners. The curriculum will combine the best of both gifted education and bilingual education, using specifically designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE) techniques, as well as differentiation of the curriculum in terms of depth and complexity of the material covered, pacing, and novelty. With "Curriculum T.W.O." we hope to make significant progress in addressing the educational needs of a large special population in California schools.

We as parents, teachers, administrators, and counselors, are part of the gifted education community. I would like to challenge all of us to set high goals this year to identify and serve the gifted children in the special population groups in our districts and regions. Together we can make a difference! ■

FROM THE EDITOR

VICKI BORTOLUSSI

This is a special edition of the *Communicator* with the theme of Special Populations. *Special* is a relative term. *Special* has a positive connotation connoting positive differences, something out of the ordinary, whatever that may be.

Special populations is a term used today in education to define groups with unique characteristics. In general, a special population might include the disabled, an ethnic minority, the economically disadvantaged, the underrepresented language minority—any clustering of individuals with similar characteristics. Special populations in regard to gifted education can refer to these groups and can also include others such as the highly gifted and the talented. A group can have special characteristics and be member of a defined special population and can also be gifted, thus requiring at least twice the strategies as needed for dealing with only one specialty.

The term *special* is not new; but the use of the phrase *special population* is current and thus requires *special* attention to be understood. The overall intent is to understand that unique needs often require unusual strategies. At the least, it is imperative to recognize that the special needs and special populations exist, no matter how they are defined. The goal is not to label but to serve, to reach, to teach, to support, to nurture.

Bearing this concept in mind, to broaden the understanding of the need for a variety of approaches, even with those who have the common thread of gifted and talented, we present this issue of the *Communicator* with the theme of special populations.

Unfortunately, there are no pat answers for any of the special populations. Sheila Moskowitz laments how this is true for her as a parent in the opening article *Our Son Did Not Come with an Instruction Book*. Two other parents, Madeleine Brandli and Kathleen Pommer write about access and success for gifted students with learning disabilities. School psychologist Marcia DiJiosia talks about the *Double Confusion* when a child is twice exceptional. Technology can provide access for special populations; Judy Lieb writes about *Education Online* and educator Terrie Gray outlines the *ED's Oasis* she developed.

Being highly gifted requires special strategies as outlined by teacher Bruce Saunders and Connie Hood explores art as a possible strategy for this population. *Meeting the Needs of the Visually Talented* is also the topic of Barbara Becker while Lori Casas looks at *Kids in Motion*.

Amanda Doherty, a gifted student now attending UC Davis, tells us what worked as she looks back on her experience with gifted education. *Opening the Language Gate* reports on a way to reach underrepresented language minority students in a special project initially funded through CAG. Another way to connect with underrepresented populations such as ethnic minorities is through special curriculum such as Robbie Wedeen's suggestion for celebrating *Dia de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead)*.

As the current wisdom moves to the trend of educating all students, recognizing the needs of special populations which exist within the category of the identified gifted students is essential. It is the hope that this *special Communicator* helps to make the concept more clear, more understood, and thus more possible. ■

Javits Grant Awarded to CAG, CDE, USC

The University of Southern California in conjunction with the California Department of Education and the California Association for the Gifted, has received a three-year federal grant (Javits Act) for Project Curriculum TWO: Training Within Classrooms and Online. Project TWO is designed to address the unique needs of students who are both gifted and English Language Learner (ELL) students. The goal of the project is to develop differentiated core curriculum experiences that promote the acquisition of sophisticated content and mastery of complex thinking skills using strategies of bilingual and gifted education. Sandra Kaplan, professor, USC School of Education, and Catherine Barkett, GATE director, California Department of Education, will serve as co-directors of the project.

Curriculum TWO will match teachers and classrooms from Enterprise and Empowerment Zones with classroom teachers in other regions of the state who have been trained in gifted and bilingual education strategies. The project will develop curriculum in history-social science using the strategies of depth, complexity, novelty, and acceleration for advanced and gifted learners; these strategies are needed to attain high levels of performance in accordance with content standards.

The project will focus on training teachers to use a variety of instructional strategies—learning-to-learn, SDAIE, independent projects, and reasoning skills.

HyperStudio, multimedia software tools for interactive presentations, reports, and projects will be provided at no cost by Roger Wagner Publishing Company to facilitate online communication among project teachers.

Participating districts will identify vertical team classrooms within their districts in grades 2 or 3, 5 and 8 (grade 11 will be added in 1998–1999). Districts include Brawley, Fontana, Garden Grove, Fresno, Hawthorne, Long Beach, and Los Angeles. All classrooms will include Spanish-speaking ELLs with intermediate comprehension in English. The material will be written in English with primary language support.

TWO will provide comprehensive professional development for teachers of the targeted classrooms using in-classroom consultation and culminating in continuing education credits from the University of Southern California.

Additionally, the project will define appropriate at-home parental support for academics by utilizing the California Association for the Gifted Parent Council network and its affiliates. A bilingual guide will be developed.

Research goals include assessing the effects of teaching high-end content to limited English students, inservicing teachers on-site and in their classrooms, assessing the effects of teaching the dimensions of depth, complexity, and novelty to attain high-end achievement (a six on a rubric), and defining the contagion factor effect when novice and experienced educators and students are paired for instruction. ■

Learning-to-learn Strategies

break into small steps | **chunk** | **prioritize** | **give examples** | **provide prompts** | **organize**

PARENT TO PARENT

Positive, Patient & Present

A Commentary on Parent Involvement

BY BEV MAST

I picked up the phone to call my daughter's biology teacher. Mr. Shahzade was a kindly, older gentleman who always welcomed my inquiries about his class. His love of science, and more importantly of the students, was evident as we discussed a project on which Sarah was working. I finished the conversation by saying that I appreciated all the extra time he spent with the students and his commitment to the education of our children. He thanked me and said it was nice to hear such positive remarks from a parent. I believe that many parents have gotten away from the three most important requirements of a good school parent: being positive, patient, and present.

Be Positive

For a parent, this can be difficult at times. The project that is assigned over the family vacation weekend may upset you. The comments on your child's paper may seem petty and unfounded. Before you call other parents to discuss your negative feelings about a classroom situation, however, consult your child's teacher and go over your concerns. Make sure that you weigh the negative with the positive. Point out that the history project with masks really turned your son on the Aztecs, but that the student-written play about Julius Caesar might have been given a few extra days, because this was the middle of soccer season and the group of students needing to get together was away that weekend. After the conference, write the teacher a note and express your appreciation for his/her insight into the problem and how it was handled to benefit all concerned.

Be Patient

This is a difficult one for me; my children frequently have to remind me to back off. Remember that your child's teacher is working with many students each day and that the paper your child wrote last night might not be critiqued for a few days. The test your child was anxious about may not be scored for another week. Your lack of patience may carry over to your children and prompt them to be less patient with their daily dealings in the classroom.

Be Present

This may be difficult for parents who work outside of the home and are unable to volunteer hours at their child's school. You can be a volunteer by sending information to your child's teacher. If your company is sponsoring a contest, send the information to the teachers and get them involved. If a business or pleasure trip takes you to an area that has great historical artifacts, pick one up and send it to school with your child. If you are away from home and have an extra hour, visit a local school district and find out about its gifted programs. When you return, share the information with your own school. An easy way to help is to volunteer your home as the base camp for projects. A space in your garage might be the perfect location for an oversized science board or Greek pillars from the latest tragedy. Make sure that if you do commit your home that you are available to supervise and help everyone keep on track.

Supporting your children and their teachers can often be taxing even for the calmest parent. Mr. Shahzade, after 40+ years of teaching, summed it up best when his closing comment to me was "don't hesitate to call, I always like to hear from concerned parents." When you are concerned and need to make a visit or a phone call to the school, make sure that the three "Ps" pave your way—positive, patient and present! ■

BEV MAST is a sixth-grade teacher in Visalia Unified School District. She is also the parent of two gifted children: Lucas, a Stanford graduate and second-year law student in San Diego, and Sarah, a freshman honors student at USC.

Save Me a Seat!

SANTA ROSA PARENT OUTREACH

Saturday, December 6, 1997
8:30 a.m. to 12 noon

Flamingo Resort Hotel & Fitness Center

Pre-registration fee: $10

Call the CAG office (650-965 0653) for your registration form

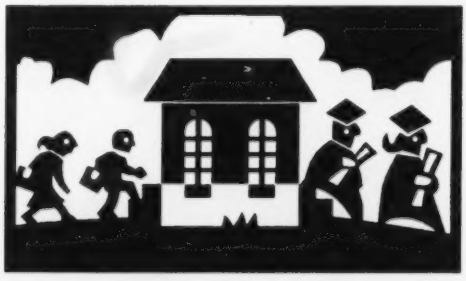
College and Beyond

Access and Success for Students with Learning and Attention Disabilities

BY MADELEINE BRANDLI AND KATHLEEN POMMER

Learning Disabilities (LD), Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) present formidable challenges to those whose symptoms persist beyond childhood. Many researchers and practitioners in the field today believe that a significant number of children with these disorders will not outgrow their symptoms and will continue to experience difficulty throughout their lives.

Superior intellectual capacity does not preclude the existence of ADHD in any child or adult. As with other types of learning problems, the symptoms of the disorder may result in underachievement and mask giftedness. Failure, accusations of laziness and poor motivation, and negative interpersonal experiences haunt many people with learning disabilities and ADHD, often resulting in low self-esteem. For LD and ADHD students, success in college depends on recognizing their own symptoms and effectively utilizing strategies to compensate for them.



Career guidance is critical for students with ADHD and other learning disabilities. Educational and vocational testing are valuable tools for pre-college students. The constraints of work environments associated with some professions may significantly aggravate the symptoms of a specific disability, while in other fields it may be much easier to make successful accommodations. Learning disabilities need not prevent a student from choosing any particular field of study or profession; however, an informed decision based on knowledge of one's own strengths and weaknesses may prevent future frustrations and disappointments and result in enhanced performance and career satisfaction.

High school counselors should be aware of the many resources available to assist college-bound seniors with learning disabilities. Laws have been enacted which require federally funded institutions to provide accommodations for students with ADHD and other learning disabilities. This includes allowing extended time, isolated rooms, and tests broken into a two-day period on standardized entrance exams such as the SAT or ACT. Parents and students should become familiar with the laws and make timely applications for these accommodations.

Books such as Peterson's *Colleges with Programs for Students with Learning Disabilities* by Mangrum and Strichart are a tremendous aide for parents and students in narrowing the col-

HISTORY OF ADHD

Hyperactivity, as it is linked with ADHD, was first recognized medically almost seventy-five years ago (Hartman, 1993). Beginning in the mid-seventies with investigations on how a child's diet may affect hyperactivity, research has evolved into a search for the physiological basis for ADHD. Linking ADHD to the brain is the newest direction that research has taken. Slight differences in the sizes of the corpus callosum in children diagnosed with ADHD have been revealed by magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) (Hynd, Semrud-Clikeman, Lorysz, Novey, Eliopulos & Lyytinen, 1991). The use of EEGs to measure event-related potentials (ERPs) has shown that children diagnosed with ADHD make more mistakes and react more slowly in activities requiring sustained attention (Klorman, 1991). Continued research into the brain activity of children and adults will attempt to pinpoint possible origins of ADHD and perhaps lead to improved ways of working with children and adults so labeled.

Leading researchers in the field of attention disorder, such as Drs. Russell Barkley at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, and Alan Zametkin and T.E. Nordahl of the National Institute of Mental Health, currently theorize that Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder has a neurological basis. They postulate that the defect is located in a part of the brain responsible for the ability to control impulses, delay gratification and sustain attention. Cognitive and behavioral problems result because people with ADHD cannot inhibit their initial responses to a given situation. Although such people are often labeled easily distractible, the attentional failure is most likely due not to the enticement of outside stimuli, but rather to the rapid onset of boredom with mildly uninteresting projects or activities. These people struggle to suppress the constant urge to engage in more stimulating activities. Unfortunately for students with ADHD, the repetitious, highly structured, sedentary nature of the typical educational environment exacerbates the symptoms of ADHD.

—M. Brandli & K. Pommer

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lege choices. "College opportunities for students with learning disabilities have never been greater" (Mangrum and Strichart, 1992). The book profiles nearly 1,000 two-year and four-year colleges and enables the reader to make some quick comparisons. It lists current facts about each school's comprehensive learning disabilities program or its special services to assist students. It provides valuable information on specific LD offerings: tutoring, special admissions, counseling, and campus support groups. The book lists the admission requirements and procedures for students with any learning disability, as well as important questions to ask when you visit a college campus. In addition, typical components of a comprehensive program for diagnostic and prescriptive planning, advisement, counseling, remediation, tutoring, and special courses for LD students are addressed. These include auxiliary aids and services, such as tape recorders and taped textbooks, calculators, typewriters, voice-activated word processors and Kurzwell Reading Machines, note-takers, and alternative examinations.

Colleges vary greatly in their programs to help students with ADHD and other learning disorders. Not all colleges and universities, and certainly not all the departments or faculty members of any specific institution, are necessarily able, or willing, to make the effort to accommodate students with LD. Students and their parents should personally contact those staff members responsible for assisting students with learning difficulties, in order to assess the willingness of a given college or university to assist students with ADHD.

Once an appropriate career path has been chosen and a supportive institution selected, the student must learn an effective system of study skills and time management techniques. This is critical for students with ADHD, since this disorder often results in highly disorganized, random and inconsistent behavior. Students can also be taught how to give themselves rewards for completing tasks, since the need for immediate gratification is an ADHD behavioral characteristic. Additionally, students must be committed to the additional time it may take them to accomplish their educational goals. College life is filled with opportunities to seek immediate gratification ("party now—study later," fraternity/sorority activities) and to avoid starting projects that are due far in the future. Study skills should include techniques for breaking down projects into smaller manageable segments which the student can complete on a timely basis.

"...the student must learn an effective system of study skills and time management techniques."

One suggestion frequently given to LD/ADHD students is that they limit the number of units taken each term to 12. Students sometimes try to take more courses than they can successfully handle, but 12 units will enable them to complete the work load required and not become overwhelmed. Gifted students often believe they can handle more units. Courses are interesting and the broad range offered at the university level can be a powerful draw for these students.

For ADHD students, stimulant medication may have proven successful during elementary and high school, and continued treatment throughout college may be recommended. In some cases, a student may be under the care of a pediatric specialist who may wish to refer him/her to a professional experienced with adult ADHD. In no case should treatment be discontinued simply because a student graduates from high school. Continued professional assessments and evaluations regarding treatment with medications may mean the difference between success and failure in college and adult life for some people with ADHD.

New experiences are relished by ADHD students and they frequently perform well early in the semester, falling behind as the novelty of the course work wears off. Students should be prepared for this loss of interest as time passes and develop strategies to successfully deal with it. Group studying may be beneficial, since it provides reinforcement as well as the rewards of camaraderie. Peer tutoring can also work for some students to help overcome boredom at the end of the semester. In some cases, colleges and universities on the quarter system may be better choices for students with ADHD than those on the semester system. There are more exams, but the courses change more often, providing greater variety which helps ADHD students persevere. Since quarter terms are typically 10 weeks long, versus 15 weeks for the semester system, long-range planning may become more manageable.

Counseling to help improve social skills for students with LD/ADHD might also be necessary, especially if the high school experience was unsatisfactory in terms of interpersonal relationships. In some cases, as when a diagnosis of LD or ADHD has been delayed into the teen years,

individual therapy and support groups may be helpful in dealing with the negative feelings from childhood. Substance abuse, depression, anxiety, and other mental disorders can coexist with ADHD and may also mimic ADHD. It is critical to rule them out and obtain an accurate diagnosis in order for treatment and compensation strategies to be effective. Many people with ADHD also have other specific learning disorders which must be addressed as well to ensure success for the student.

Attention Deficit Disorder and Learning Disabilities challenge students in ways that are difficult to understand for those who do not have these disabilities. Yet, the creativity and enormous reserve of energy which often accompany LD and ADHD confer great benefits on those who are successful in harnessing their positive aspects in college and throughout adulthood. ■

MADELEINE BRANDLI has presented annually at CAG conferences and has lectured to parent/teacher groups and university students on subjects related to brain and behavior, giftedness, and learning differences. She is the parent of two gifted young adults who attended schools in the Irvine Unified School District, where she served for many years as a parent volunteer/consultant.

KATHLEEN POMMER has been an elementary school GATE teacher for over 30 years, and was the 1987 recipient of CAG's Orange County Teacher of the Year Award.

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SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT ADHD

A.D.D. WareHouse
300 N.W. 70th Ave., Suite 102
Plantation, FL 33317
(800) 233-9273, (305) 792-8944

CH.A.D.D. (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder)
499 N.W. 70th Ave., Suite 308
Plantation, FL 33317
(305) 587-3700

ADDA (National Attention Deficit Disorder Association)
http://www.add.org/

ADD/LD Online Resource Center
http://www4.interaccess.com/add/
Provides up-to-date news, reviews, and research on ADD and LD.

SEARCH

Continued from 1

learned the names of the colors.

When my son was six, I still did not feel right about the contrasts in his abilities. I dragged him to an audiologist for a full hearing evaluation. When I told him that his hearing was fine, he replied, "I knew that Mom, why didn't you just ask me?" Then we had his eyes checked—nothing wrong there. We went to a speech pathologist who had two gifted children of her own. She specialized in learning disabilities that affect speech and language. Her findings were another list of opposites. While my son scored three to six years above his age in remembering sentences, understanding verbal directions, processing verbal information, and listening for competing words, he was dismally behind in remembering lists of numbers or unrelated words, and distinguishing words from a noisy background. The therapist said that he would have difficulty memorizing number facts and information like his address. I really did not understand the implications of these deficits until much later.

My son was lucky enough to receive a space for first grade at the high ability/gifted magnet elementary school that his sister attended. I became active in the parent group on campus, joined the California Association for the Gifted, and even went to a convention of the National Association for Gifted Children. My son was tested and identified gifted at the end of first grade. His first- and second-grade teachers were challenged by his inventiveness, as well as his ability to see new solutions to problems, and look at everyday things in different ways. He still could not memorize his phone number, never mind his address, or remember where he left his sweatshirt, but

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he could put together a Lego kit with a 32-page instruction booklet that was designed for 9- to 12-year-olds.

Then came third grade. I knew and respected my son's teacher, having helped in the classroom when he was my daughter's teacher. The class was always busy investigating, reading, formulating, and experimenting. My son, however, could not memorize the 15 weekly spelling words. We tried every method I could think of, and ended up writing the words repeatedly, sometimes 40 to 70 times during the week. He could not write fast enough to remember the dictation sentences as the teacher read them, so every week he had to memorize those, too. My son read constantly, sometimes a book a day. Multiplication tables were introduced, and so was cursive writing. He could solve math word problems that no one else could, but every multiplication problem turned into a multi-step addition problem (he still hadn't memorized the addition facts, but could use his fingers or marks on the paper). Being left-handed, and unable to memorize the new turns and twists of cursive, we turned to an occupational therapist for a more kinesthetic approach to writing.

Then came paragraph writing for book reports and social studies tests. My son got frustrated and cried as he could not remember the sentences long enough to get them on paper. We worked on dictating them into a tape recorder or to me at the computer. He started crying in class out of frustration, could not stay in his seat, and finally got suspended for hitting other children on the playground. My sweet, thought-

WHERE DO I BEGIN?

Seven Suggestions for Parents of Gifted Children with Learning Disabilities

1. Write a good description of your child's strengths and weaknesses.
   - Observe your child at home and at school.
   - Get your child's teacher and other professionals (pediatrician, coach, religious school teacher, therapist) to write down their observations.
2. Collect the names of professionals in your area who have experience working with gifted children. These may include educational therapists, psychologists, educational psychologists, neuropsychologists, and speech therapists.
   - Ask teachers, other parents, and your regional CAG representatives for referrals.
   - Contact local professional organizations for appropriate referrals.
3. Educate and inform yourself.
   - Read about giftedness, learning disabilities, and ADD in libraries, association journals, and on the Internet.
   - Go to classes, seminars, and conventions sponsored by gifted organizations, educational professionals, college community outreach, and local schools.
   - Join support groups for parents of children with similar disabilities.
4. Schedule a conference with your chosen professional.
   - Prepare a list of questions to ask.
   - Inquire about the professional's experience with gifted children.
   - Find out exactly what that professional will be doing with your child (talking, testing, working on learning techniques).
   - Suggest that the professional talk to your child's teachers, coaches, siblings, etc. about the best way to work with your child.
   - Ask for written materials explaining your child's weakness and a therapy plan.
5. Monitor your child's progress.
   - Hold regular conferences with your child's teacher to compare notes on methods that are working at school and at home.
   - Reinforce your child's new skills with activities at home.
   - Keep records of all of the testing, meetings, and reports about your child.
6. Enjoy your child.
   - Focus on abilities and strengths, not just disabilities and weaknesses.
   - Find activities to do together that are not therapy or schoolwork.
7. Support gifted organizations, such as CAG, so that research can continue and so that sharing of information can help to better understand gifted learning-disabled children.

—S. Moskowitz

149 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ful, friendly, creative boy had turned into someone I did not know. His intelligence, which had up until now helped him compensate, could no longer overcome the difficulties he was experiencing in a more complicated world.

So the search started anew to explain my son's difficulties in a way that would help him cope with the tasks at hand. First, we went to a psychologist who specialized in gifted children, thinking maybe it was a psychological problem that made him feel so incapable. Several months of therapy failed to make a dent in his declining welfare, so we moved on. Then we consulted with an educational therapist who had a reputation of working with gifted children, and also had extensive experience with ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder). Other family members had been diagnosed with ADHD and/or memory and learning difficulties, and we knew that there could be a genetic link. I laboriously collected samples of my son's schoolwork, and the therapist had a session with him.

Then came a meeting with my husband and me. My husband described his feeling that our son's "problems" were not chronic, but were more an aspect of the development of a gifted child. My husband observed that when our son became interested in a given assignment, he was better able to focus his attention. His teacher felt the same way. I had a gut maternal feeling that there was a lot more going on than that. The therapist sent us home to observe our son and to return when we had a description of him upon which we could both agree, but that never happened.

Many months later, I consulted a speech therapist who specialized in cognitive-linguistic therapy. She suggested that we see a neuropsychologist. The most respected one in the area had a three-month waiting list. During that time, I convinced my husband to try just one more specialist, and started saving my money.

The neuropsychologist took accounts from my son, his teacher, my husband, and me as to what he was experiencing. She completed over ten hours of testing during three sessions. The result was a 15-page description of my son and how he learned, and it made sense to everyone. He was indeed gifted, but was operating with a weakness in active working memory, accounting for his difficulty in holding onto an idea while he develops, elaborates or uses it, or even holding it so that he can recall information from long-term memory. This explained his difficulty with recalling words in spontaneous speech, memorizing math facts, or completing an essay. Additionally, she determined that his memory abilities were being further reduced by a weakness in his attention skills. If he did not attend well or consistently enough, information could not get encoded into his memory. The bottom line was that my son had a learning disability (one that affected his memory and learning) and ADD. Now what?!

With a clearer understanding of my son's difficulties and how he learned, I set about to make changes at home and in his classroom to better accommodate his abilities, despite his disabilities. I searched for an educational therapist who understood his memory deficits, but as he was not the typical student, I could find no one. I was on my own.

I spent the summer before fourth grade collecting books, visiting teacher material stores, and searching for information on memory, learning disabilities, and giftedness. We saw a psychiatrist who specializes in ADD and decided to try medication (Adderall).

We walked into school that September fully equipped to meet the challenge, whatever it might be. My son worked very hard overcoming his fear of writing, learning to manage his time in class and at home, learning to use the computer keyboard so he could type a final draft instead of writing it in cursive, reducing his frustration level when he could not accomplish a task, using a multiplication table cheat sheet when no one else needed one, and having to go to the office to get his medication at lunch. We still had many crying sessions at home when he had to bring unfinished schoolwork home to complete, had to phone classmates to get assignments he had not remembered, and got so distracted that toothbrushing took up to 30 minutes.

At the annual CAG convention last March, I sat down for lunch at the table designated "Gifted and Learning Disabled." There was no one else there. Finally, a teacher sat down who was curious, but had no experience in the area. We were joined by a couple of people with nowhere else to sit, and finally by a few parents who were just starting to realize what was happening with their children. Some of their kids couldn't get identified as gifted because of their learning disabilities, and some couldn't get identified as learning disabled because of their giftedness. I even thought of some of my own deaf speech therapy clients who were gifted and couldn't get identified. We have a long way to go to better serve our disabled gifted children.

My son is now a happy, curious, friendly, and sometimes distracted fifth-grader. He got straight As on his final report card in June. I feel like we *finally* found the instruction book for my son, though I know that I have many more pages to write. ■

SHEILA MOSKOWITZ, M.A., is the parent of two gifted children. She is very involved in the parent groups at her children's' elementary and middle school Gifted Magnets in the L.A. Unified School District. As a speech therapist, she has specialized in deaf and other handicapped children for the past 17 years.

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DOUBLE CONFUSION

When a child is twice exceptional

BY MARCIA DIJIOSIA

Brian analyzes a complex novel, but cannot decode a complex word.

Jessica can figure out a problem in geometry, but cannot memorize a formula.

Brandon is able to relate an event in detail that occurred when he was seven years old, but cannot remember a phone number he just looked up in a directory.

Heather is able to discuss the topic of photosynthesis, but when asked about it on a timed test is unable to determine the proper responses.

All of these children probably cause confusion in the minds of parents and teachers. One moment they are working out complex ideas and the next they are unable to perform the simplest of tasks. What often goes unrecognized and certainly not diagnosed, is that these children should be double-labeled: gifted and learning disabled. They are also known as students who are "twice exceptional." Besides not being recognized as either gifted or learning disabled, the child's need to be served in *both* areas is also overlooked.

Many educators are skeptical that a child with learning disabilities could also be considered gifted. Achievement levels may be very low because the child has not learned techniques for compensation. Or, students may be working at an average level in relation to the rest of the class, but not really be working up to their full potential. These surface observations complicate the identification of such students as having abilities within the gifted range.

Determining the difference between an underachieving gifted student and one with learning disabilities can be an exercise in bewilderment. The descriptions found in literature and research for the learning disabled and the underachiever match almost word for word. Both groups are often described as perfectionists, distractible, rebellious against drill and repetition, hyperactive, low in self-esteem, and chronically inattentive. They often become frustrated by classroom expectations or assignments and tend to be supersensitive emotionally. The one label that is simple for these children to earn is that of being lazy. It is felt that if they would only concentrate and try harder everything would be all right. This lack of awareness of the needs of these students coupled with the difficulty in determining whether the problem is a learning disability or underachievement allows for these children to remain floundering in school for years.

It is important to first be aware of some of the signs that may be exhibited among children with learning disabilities. Often their handwriting is messy and difficult to read and spelling is poor. They have problems following directions and are often highly disorganized. Rote memory or short term memory assignments cause them to tune out. Listening to lectures or being expected to pay attention for long periods of time can be an unattainable expectation. A timed test rarely gives an indication of performance levels.

With so many of these indicators being true for both underachievers and the learning disabled, the best way to identify true problems is through assessment. A battery of tests that includes an assessment of sequencing, visual and auditory memory, spatial perception, visual-motor integration, and abstract reasoning skills will help to identify some areas of strength and weakness. When a learning disabled gifted child exists, there will be distinct highs and lows that show a severe discrepancy between the two areas. Vocabulary may be high, as well as abstract reasoning, but short-term auditory memory or visual-motor speed will be low. In this manner, the gifted traits might be discovered and the deficits uncovered for a true picture of the student's academic potential.

Once the areas of need are identified, classroom modifications and strategies may be employed to ensure academic success. The child may have been trying to compensate for so long that some have learned little tricks to get by the disability. Often what occurs is that the children are able to get by with those practices at the elementary level or even middle school, but when they come up against high school expectations and the stress associated with those expectations, these students hit a brick wall. That is why it is best to identify problem situations early; so that with a combination of compensation and modification, success rather than failure can be the outcome.

Classroom modifications may come in many guises. Assignments, grading, testing, and the methods used to present information all can be modified as needed.

- Give a dysgraphic child a computer as soon as

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possible. Assignments and notetaking will flow rather than frustrate.

- Give directions in both oral and written form and then have the child explain them back to the teacher.
- Allow additional time to complete assignments and tests which can make the difference between completing them successfully rather than failing them entirely.
- Make a tape recorder available, both for replaying assignment directions and for a student's oral presentations in lieu of written work.
- Debrief the student on the key points of an assignment. Break it down into smaller segments and organize them in a sequential manner.
- Provide multisensory aspects to an assignment in order to entice the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners.
- Encourage the pleasures of learning rather than the pressures of competition for grades. Have students compete with themselves (personal best) and not with each other.
- Allow students to show knowledge, progress, and competencies by means other than tests. If necessary, allow the student to take the test alone in a room with fewer distractions or at home for an open-book exercise.
- Encourage a sense of security that risk-taking is possible and safe. Mistakes are allowed and made by everyone at some time.
- Get the child's attention by discovering areas of passion and engaging the child through related activities. Try to make the material as relevant as possible.
- Keep rote work to a minimum and utilize more abstract concepts. Use both holistic and sequential methods for disseminating information.
- Determine quickly if a strategy is not working and switch gears. Don't continue if the strategy isn't getting the desired result.

With proper identification followed by home and school support, the twice-exceptional student has the greatest chance for success. No longer labeled as a lazy child, compensation and modification allow for academic potential to be realized. There are no longer insurmountable barriers to accomplishment and strong self-concept. ■

MARCIA DIJIOSIA is a GATE psychologist with San Diego City Schools. She is also an educator representative on the CAG Board.

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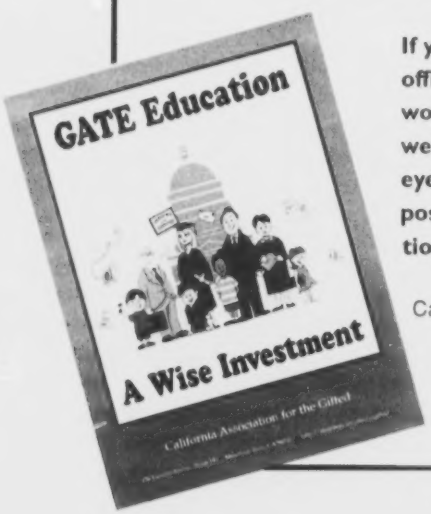
Got a foot or two of wall space?



If you're a GATE Administrator, you've got an office wall that needs a poster to help spread the word about gifted and talented education. And we've got the poster you need. It's big, bold, and eyecatching. Best of all, it's only $5 plus tax and postage. Send your check, PO, or charge information today. Then watch for your tube in the mail.

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TECH NET

Education Online

An Alternative Classroom

BY JUDY LIEB

The Internet is the way many people get information of all types, from news and weather to virtual field trips. Internet educational resources are used by parents, students, and teachers. The Internet also has another function that is being tapped by many educational institutions—an educational delivery system. As of this writing, there are more than 1,000 online courses nationwide "ranging from correspondence courses that simply have moved from the mailbox to the Net, to a smattering of full-fledged master's degree programs presented by accredited institutions" (Archibold, 1997). According to Frank Withrow, director of educational programs for the NASA Classroom of the Future, "...telecommunications services will find their natural place in education. Most important, they will make high-quality education available to everyone" (1997).

Online classes can provide an alternative or addition to regular educational opportunities for special populations of gifted students. Some gifted students may find the experience of online education broadens their educational experience and gives a new dimension to learning. Students can enroll in classes not offered by their particular school. Students can take classes with students from various geographical locations, including other states and countries. Classes could be set up that specifically meet the diverse needs of many of our gifted students.

Although most online classes are offered at the college and university level, some high schools are beginning to design courses for their students. Parents and students considering online courses need to be aware of what constitutes a good online course and have some background in the technology comprising online education.

TECHNOLOGY

Distance learning has been part of education for many years using television, satellite, telephone, and computer technologies to connect students and teachers. In some distance learning courses, students were all together at one site and the instructor at another. This scenario was typically used when there were no local instructors for a particular course, or when there were very few students enrolled in one course. Interaction could be by two-way video or telephone connections.

Telecourses provide another form of distance learning. Courses are televised for at-home study and students may attend a local class once or twice during the course.

Online education may use some distance learning technologies, but it is primarily computer based. Online courses provide students with a class that is continually in session. Students can communicate with faculty and fellow students in a place not constrained by time or distance. The field of possible students engaged in scholastic dialogue is broadened by the elimination of these barriers. Currently there are a variety of courses offered online. This article will examine a few.

EXAMPLES

Education Program for Gifted Youth

The Education Program for Gifted Youth (EPGY) at Stanford University is a program that provides a variety of courses to very bright students of all grades. EPGY's purpose is to provide gifted students with courses that are otherwise not available to them. The program also allows younger students to take higher level courses without being placed in classes with older students.

Courses are offered for elementary and secondary students through the Stanford Continuing Studies Program. They include a K-8 mathematics sequence, beginning and intermediate algebra, and precalculus. Advanced Placement mathematics and physics courses are offered in Calculus A, B, and C; Physics C (mechanics) and Physics C (electricity and magnetism). College-level mathematics and physics courses include: linear algebra, multivariate calculus, differential equations, elementary theory of numbers, introduction to logic, electricity and magnetism lab, optics, thermodynamics, and modern physics. Three expository writing classes are also offered.

Courses consist of online and offline components. Lectures are presented online with digitized sound and graphics which model a regular classroom. Exercises follow the lectures and may be direct or interactive expositions. Other exercises are presented offline. Students file weekly electronic reports with their instructors and can receive help by telephone and

electronic mail. EPGY can be reached by phone at (415) 329-9920 or on the Web at http://www.epgy.Stanford.edu/epgy.

University of Southern California

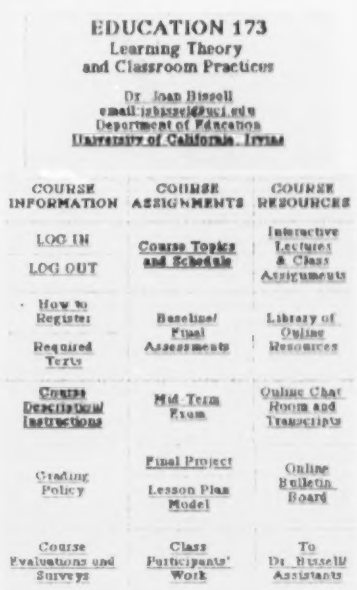
The School of Education at the University of Southern California began offering an online course in instructional design for doctorate students in the last year. Edward Kazlauskas, professor of instructional technology at USC, developed the course to serve students at diverse locations over a large geographic region in the state. The online course offers the same content as the classroom course.

Kazlauskas suggests that students looking to take an online course look for the same qualifications in the instructor and course content that they would if taking a regular course.

- Is the teacher an authority in their field and is the course offered by an established and accredited school or professional organization?
- Does the electronic course have links to other Web sites?
- Are the students connected to each other and the professor?
- What type of library resources are available to the student?
- What other resources will the student need? (For example, the course offered at USC also has an electronic textbook.)

Kazlauskas also discussed some of the advantages of online courses. He noted that in his experience as a professor of such a course, both the teacher and the students work hard and spend more hours on the course content. Students and the teacher seem to have more ongoing interaction. Students communicate with the teacher on an ongoing and regular basis. The teacher needs to respond to questions and concerns from the students in a timely fashion, not just once a week in class or during office hours. Kazlauskas also found that he knew more about his students as conversations were electronic and ongoing. A student did not have to wait to be called on in class before responding.

Students met face-to-face in an initial course meeting, then continued to meet in an electronic chat room, where students and work groups gathered electronically at a certain time to discuss class topics. Most of the students taking this class were working adults who found that they could work on their course work when they had time in their schedule and did not have to spend time commuting to class.



Online course at the University of California, Irvine features chat rooms, a resource library, and interactive lectures.

Kazlauskas noted that students and instructors need to be aware that online courses are a new way of teaching and learning which may not fit all instructors or students.

University of California at Irvine

The University of California, Irvine offers a class for educators called Learning Theories and Classroom Practice, online. This course is taught by Joan Bissell, senior lecturer at UCI. Peter Jones, an assistant to Bissell, discussed online education and the course. Jones echoed the statement that students need to look for the quality of a program, whether it is online or not. He mentioned some of the same program quality indicators as Kazlauskas in the previous section, such as the credentials of the professor and the university. Jones also said that students need to be aware of the type of credit they receive for an online class.

UCI's course is rigorous and has various components. Students have a textbook and a video of good teaching strategies to use as part of the course work. Interactions between the students and the teacher takes place via electronic mail, in a chat room, and via an electronic bulletin board. The chat rooms are archived so students can return to review the discussion contents.

This course features interactive lectures tied to the textbook with hypertext (words on the screen which are clicked and lead to other sources). Each topic discussed in the class has its own Web-based reference page for students to use to collect information for their projects and midterm exams. Students can link to other sites from the lecture notes. Students can review the lecture material in any order and spend as much time as needed in each lecture topic because the lecture is online.

Projects and exams are submitted online. There is a section where students can look at the projects of others in the class. Students can even look at course evaluations completed by previous groups. The Web browser setting is http://www.gse.uci.edu/ed173 to see the various compo-

See EDUCATION ONLINE, 42

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ED*s Oasis

Teacher Support for Internet Use

BY TERRIE GRAY

Too many teachers the Internet is like one of those old "Good News/Bad News" jokes: The good news is you now have Internet in your classroom; the bad news is that now you have to use the Internet in your classroom. In candid moments, most teachers will admit that having access to the Internet is a mixed blessing: it leads to wonderful learning opportunities, but requires a great investment of time and energy.

Let's look in on a few teachers and see what Internet access means to them. Anne, fresh out of college, just found out that she will be teaching fourth grade in the fall. She is comfortable using the computer to write papers, balance her checkbook, and e-mail her parents, but not at all sure how to use it for instruction. She is lucky, though; there will be four computers in her room and a technology-experienced teacher right next door.

Ben is a veteran high school science teacher, who, after many faithful years of service, is pretty clear on what works and what doesn't. Last year's NetDay effort and a reallocation of site and district funds have introduced a new element to his classroom—telecommunications. Now what? Ben's not sure whether this does work or doesn't work. He knows he is supposed to get the kids to use the computers, but he is not sure where the Internet fits in his traditional schedule of labs, investigations, textwork, and exams. Cindy, Dan, and Eva are middle school teachers who will be team teaching for the first time. They're responsible for developing at least one unit that ties together their primary subjects: English, history, and science. They wonder if they can somehow use the Internet in a unified, thematic approach to curriculum.

Finally, Frank is the district technology specialist. He is responsible for coordinating technology professional development workshops, and works with the district's Ed Tech committee and the various curriculum committees. While Frank has had a lot of experience with technology, he sometimes feels isolated and could use some help in meeting the technology learning needs of teachers and district personnel.

Hopefully, each of these educators receives support through needs-based staff development programs, timely peer coaching, and responsive administrators. However, even the most comprehensive program cannot address every need at the moment it arises.

Fortunately, a new resource is now available to teachers from Tallahassee to Seattle, before school and after—and it's free. All a teacher has to do is log on the Internet and link to ED's Oasis—http://www.EDsOasis.org/.

What is ED's Oasis? The creator's response

ED's Oasis is a multi-function Web site developed by a team of educators to help teachers use the Internet with their students. It is a grant-based project funded by AT&T Foundation and administered by the Stanislaus County Office of Education in Northern California. All of the resources contained on the ED's Oasis Web site were developed by teachers for teachers.

Years as a classroom teacher and as a mentor teacher put me in contact with teachers like those described at the beginning of the article. Being immersed in a teaching environment and participating with teachers at state and national conferences and workshops made it possible to observe teachers as they struggled to master various uses of the Internet. While they learned about telecommunications, I discovered a few principles associated with introducing the Internet into education.

1. Learning to use technology and telecommunications is hard work.
2. Anticipating *having* to use it sometimes generates uncomfortable feelings of stress, anxiety, self-doubt, resentment, and fear.
3. Common to all teachers, including those who are excited and optimistic about using the Internet, is a set of nagging questions:
   - How should I modify classroom activities to make the best use of the Internet?

- How can I be sure all this effort and expense is worth it?
- Is using the Internet going to help my students?

ED's Oasis was created to address these questions, in the hope that teachers who were initially uncomfortable would become more confident and that all site visitors would develop into capable Instructional Internet users. To accomplish this objective, the site contains three main sections. The first focuses on a Web site rating system, the second on resources, and the third on role models—a new version of the "3 Rs."

Good Materials

This is a world of rating systems, from movies to linens to appliances. It is known at a glance which show is okay for preteens, which sheets to use for visiting in-laws, and which Salad Shooter is suitable for a best friend's wedding shower.

How are ratings determined? Are Siskel's and Eberts' thumbs up or thumbs downs gravity dependent? No, of course not. Ratings are based on guidelines.

Similarly, choosing the best Web sites to use with students involves the use of guidelines. ED's Oasis staff uses a set of criteria developed in collaboration with the California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse. The first eight of the 30 items evaluate the level of student interactivity possible at the site and answer the implicit question, "What can students *do* here?" These guidelines focus on the features of the Web that extend learning possibilities beyond those available via print media, videos, CDs, and software. In the evaluation process, educational Web sites that provide students opportunities to communicate, access timely information, and contribute are rated more highly than sites that do not. These sites allow students to send and receive messages to and from geographically distant peers or subject matter experts. They also allow access to information that is too new or too extensive to be available in a textbook or a library. Students can also share their original data, findings, stories, and projects with others.

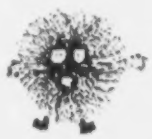
The next section of the guidelines evaluates the site's interface design, and determines whether it is navigable, readable, and responsive to user control. The final sections examine the site's curricular and instructional strength, its compliance with legal requirements regarding bias and stereotype, the quality of its support materials, and its appeal to and support of diverse learners. Educators who link to any site in the ED's Oasis "Treasure Zone" can be confident that it is safe, information-rich, intellectually engaging, and appropriate for classroom use.

Role Models

Linking to ED's Oasis is going to eliminate some of those frustrating search engine experiences. For example, one of my students who wanted information about

See ED'S OASIS, 42

MindsEye Monster Exchange



http://www.cenet.net/mindseye/home.html

Project Summary:

- **Student groups and classrooms work collaboratively on a technology based language arts project, which has many offerings to the students and teacher. The unit is mapped to meet areas of the NY State Standards of Learning and specific core classroom curriculum.**
- **Each classroom is split into groups who then design original monster pictures.**
- **The original monster design is then described using learned writing skills and the descriptive writing process. The description is written knowing that audience will be another student trying to draw the same monster just from reading the description**
- **The partnered classes then exchange their descriptions via e-mail and the WWW. These students are then challenged to use reading comprehension skills to read the descriptions and translate them into a monster picture that it describes. The true challenge involves getting a redrawn picture as close to the original picture as possible without looking at the original and only using the exchanged written description.**
- **The written descriptions, original monster pictures, and redrawn monster pictures are scanned and uploaded to the WWW using the browser based Monster Gallery Builder. The Monster Gallery Builder is entirely form based and does not require the teacher or student to know any HTML code.**
- **The Monster Galleries are then published and feedback is discussed using email and provided Monster Exchange chat rooms.**

The Monster Exchange provides a good reason for using writing skills, the descriptive writing process, and reading comprehension skills.

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Highly Gifted Students

A Report from the Trenches

BY BRUCE SAUNDERS

Six students walk into a classroom: one highly gifted, one gifted, another average, a fourth in need of sheltered instruction, an ESL student, and a special education student. Can you put the right labels on the right kids? After 20 years of classroom teaching, I wouldn't even try. But give me 20 minutes with each one, and I'll bet I can match students and labels to a tee. Why? Because although all students were created with an equal right to quality education, all students were not created with equal academic ability. This should be beyond dispute. Unfortunately, it is not.

As a passion for egalitarianism sweeps across the country, advocates for gifted and highly gifted programs repeatedly defend themselves against the charge of elitism. The argument goes something like this: Resources that would benefit all students are being withheld from the average and given to a select minority. That minority's gifted label is itself often deeply suspicious. And the solution is obvious: heterogeneous grouping. Here all opportunities are given to everyone equally, and a rising tide of excellence inspired by the academically adept lifts everyone. This is nonsense. It's well-intended nonsense, but still nonsense.

As a reader of this journal, you probably need little convincing that highly gifted and gifted students need special programs. But you may also find yourself on the defensive end of an argument, under assault by the misinformed and the foolish. Take comfort; there's lots of ammunition you can load up and fire.

Experienced educators and researchers agree that while it is tough to define superior academic ability, it exists and needs cultivation. What is more, the research is clear that grouping the high ability learners benefits all students. All students, no matter their ability, suffer when they are in programs that assume all students should be given the same amount of time to master the same material. When students are grouped by their ability, no matter what it is, and given appropriate course work, all benefit academically and psychologically.

Last spring, the Los Angeles Unified School District made a bold move and dramatically expanded its high school programs for highly gifted students. No one should begin a new school program, or expand an old one, just because there is a sense that it would be a nice and good thing. There should be a compelling rationale and a strong likelihood that the suggested program will work. In considering who should participate and what the programs should look like, several issues came to mind.

First, are these programs elitist? No. What highly gifted students are routinely asked to do is far beyond the ability of the average or even the gifted student. Highly gifted students, with an IQ of 145 and above, are almost as different from gifted students, with an IQ of 130, as gifted students are from average students, whose IQs range from 90–110. The highly gifted represent the top one-half of 1% of intelligence in the general population. An eighth grader who masters calculus, college physics, comparative literature, and advanced studies in American history absolutely does not belong in the regular academic classroom. If every student were able to study this material at this level but the opportunities were reserved only for the highly gifted, then the charge of elitism would stick. But stick it does not.

Second, what are highly gifted students like academically? An IQ score of 145 or higher means that these students have, in educational parlance, extremely high general cognitive ability. In plain language, that means they are very smart indeed. They recognize and process information of all kinds quickly and efficiently. With strong memory skills, they manipulate the information adroitly, making generalizations, detecting relationships, sensing nuances of meaning, and determining implications. They prefer working at the higher levels of thought and have a low tolerance for academic tasks that leave them under-challenged. They have a peculiar curiosity and a drive to understand why things are and how they came to be that way. Because they feed off

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of each other's intense curiosity, enthusiasm for learning, and drive for excellence, highly gifted students usually prefer to work with other highly gifted students in academic pursuits.

Third, what are these students like emotionally? You can depend on highly gifted students to behave as all adolescents behave. There will be good days and bad, different personalities will be tried on, the age-old adolescent conflict between conformity and individuality will persist, hormones will rage, romances will develop, and authority will be challenged. In short, you get the whole adolescent package. And this is exactly why these students should be clustered for academics and not skipped in school years. Just because youngsters can handle college-level work does not mean that it makes sense to send those youngsters to college. Let them grow up with age peers but attend classes with intellectual peers. There they may learn to harness any tendency to competitiveness in productive ways. There they may learn to mitigate the negative aspects of perfectionism.

Now that we've established that highly gifted students are so different from other students that they should be grouped for academics, how does one create course work that is worthy of their gifts? This is not easy. Many programs for high ability students offer little that is qualitatively different from what other students get—just more of it. What these exceptionally able students need is an accelerated program that allows them to move through a course of study considerably faster than other students. They should also delve deeper into subjects than other students do. Keep the challenge high. Highly gifted students should be spending at least 60% (some argue 90%) of their time at the highest levels of thinking. At the same time keep in mind that no student can do higher level thinking without something to think about. Independent work and the occasional lecture provide effective vehicles for transmitting the building blocks of academic subjects. These students should also have many opportunities to explore the enriching artistic, musical, kinesthetic, and literary expressions related to their academic subjects because so many of them have strengths in these areas that are equal to their academic strengths.

" Just because youngsters can handle college-level work does not mean that it makes sense to send those youngsters to college"

A highly gifted program should have great flexibility within a predictable structure. Make sure there are independent research projects, self-selected readings, and offerings of extra credit. Don't allow a program to waste a student's time. If one pre-tests to find out what students know, teaching what the students have already mastered will be avoided. Finally, highly gifted students have a mature awareness of the world around them and a sensitivity to the problems of others. A good program should provide highly gifted students with opportunities for mentoring other students. In this win-win arrangement, highly gifted students can give expert help and encouragement to others while at the same time they can derive great personal satisfaction from their contribution.

Next, what nuts-and-bolts concerns should be kept in mind as highly gifted programs take shape? First, establish the admissions standards to the program. These should be based on ability and performance. Here IQ scores, results of standardized tests, GPA, and teacher evaluations are quite helpful. Cluster the highly gifted to the greatest extent possible in academic classes but place them in the regular school program where appropriate. Highly gifted students can learn much from others and should join the whole school for electives, P.E., homeroom, and extra-curricular activities. Because not all highly gifted students have equal strengths in all academic areas, it is essential that students be allowed to opt out of a highly gifted class if the demands are too great for their strengths. Finally, allow for cross-grade grouping so that students may proceed at a pace that fits their abilities and interests.

How are parents best involved? A good program should encourage the creation of a parent group and guide that group to similar groups at other schools. The group should serve as a liaison between teachers, counselors, administrators, and concerned parents. If parents care to, allow them to provide funds for extras such as specialized books, teaching materials, equipment, and field studies. And perhaps most important of all, encourage parents to share their expertise with classroom teachers. Parents of my students have shared their expertise in law, medicine, science, technology, archaeology, history, art, and entertainment. They have given my students some of their most memorable school experiences.

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Looking Back: A Student's Perspective

BY AMANDA DOHERTY

When I joined GATE as a third-grade student, the program presented opportunities to learn about history, technology, math, music, and myself in new and fascinating ways. Planning and participating in a medieval fair, creating an invention and presenting my product in a competition, and writing my first research report all challenged and stimulated me.

However, my peers watched with a mixture of wonder and resentment as the other GATE students and I left the classroom for our pull-out program. I began to see more clearly that gifted didn't necessarily mean lucky. The pull-out nature of our school's program heightened the distinction between the GATE participants and other kids, who often pressured us GATE students to skip our weekly session and stay in the classroom instead; this fostered torn allegiances and mutual resentment. Even the teacher seemed resentful, as if our leaving her class to go to GATE was a criticism of her teaching abilities. Leaving class to go to GATE often meant struggling later to catch up on classwork, or sheer disappointment at having missed a fun activity that had transpired during our absence.

Mrs. Margaret Twombley of Redding, my elementary school GATE teacher, offered support and encouragement. She guided discussions of our frustrations and concerns, and offered suggestions for coping with the challenging aspects of gifted-

ness. She encouraged us to explore our potential and feel secure in our abilities, but she also reminded us to look outside ourselves and be sensitive to others. She challenged us to be members of a team, as well as leaders; to be confident, but not cocky; to speak out as well as listen.

Constantly plunging into new and challenging activities in GATE built my self-confidence, and gave me courage to take risks—tools that have helped me in all my endeavors, from joining a swim team to analyzing *Hamlet* to earning my Girl Scout Gold Award. The interpersonal skills which GATE enhanced, like cooperation and respect, have come to my aid countless times at school and in the community.

Not all GATE programs are so effective. When I entered middle school, I discovered a floundering GATE program. A reputable teacher had just left for another school, and the new teacher approached GATE like any other class: with worksheets, homework, and grades. Disappointed, I dropped out of GATE. However, my new seven-period day enabled me to take advanced band, art, computers, Spanish, advanced math, and more. The variety held my interest and compensated for the lack of a strong GATE class.

High school presented yet another change, with a strong honors and Advanced Placement program. Many students from my elementary school GATE class dropped out of the advanced track in high school,

See LOOKING BACK, 24

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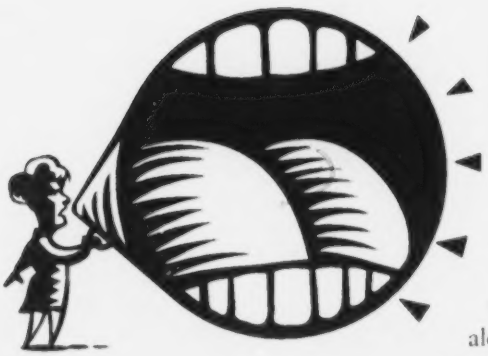
Stand Up and Speak!

BY ALAN FRIEDENBERG



Being able to communicate well is important in your everyday life. Do you panic when your teacher announces that each student will be expected to make a speech? How will you approach this assignment? Are you not going to worry about it because you'll think of something to say at the last minute? What a big mistake that would be!

Good speeches need good preparation. A lot of speakers may sound like they are making up stuff as they go along, but that's just their style. Even these informal speeches take planning and practice.

To give a good speech, you have to write a good speech. But even before you can write your speech, you have to decide what you're going to write about. There are many sources to help you choose a topic. Sometimes your teacher will give you a topic but sometimes you will need to choose your own. You can ask your teacher or parents to suggest topics. What topic interests you most?

GATHERING INFORMATION

Once you have chosen a topic, you need to gather information about it. To get the information you need, you can

- use your personal experience.
- interview people who know a lot about this topic.
- read books, encyclopedias, and magazine articles that discuss this topic.

As you collect your information, take notes. Write down only the most important ideas and facts. Use your own words.

ORGANIZING THE SPEECH

Now that you have gathered your information, it is time to write your speech. There are three main parts to a speech—the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. Every speech needs this organization. But what you say—and how you say it—is up to you.

The Introduction

The first order of business is getting the attention of your audience and saying what you are going to talk about. Sometimes starting with a question gets the audience involved with your topic. Try writing one of your own.

The Body

The body is the main part of the speech. This is where you talk in detail about your topic. Begin by deciding on the main points you want to make in your speech.

List three main points you want to make about your speech topic.

If all you do in the body of your speech is list the main points, your speech won't be very interesting. You need to expand your main points with supporting reasons. Now, write three supporting reasons for each main point in your speech.

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The Conclusion

You have now said what you wanted to say. Now you're ready to wrap it up. Your conclusion should summarize the main points of your speech, making sure your audience knows exactly where you stand. You want an ending your listeners will remember. Try writing a conclusion to your own speech. It is time to really reach out to your audience.

Now, write out your entire speech on a separate sheet of paper. Read it over. How does it sound? If you're feeling confident, exchange speeches with a friend. Then discuss each other's speech. What did each of you like about the other's speech? What parts could be improved?

GIVING A SPEECH

Pretend the big day has arrived. Any minute now your teacher is going to call your name, and you're going to have to stand in front of all your friends and give a speech. What happens if you forget your lines? What happens if you sweat so much you soak your note cards? Relax.

Being Prepared

Let's face it, there is no way you can fake public speaking. If you're unprepared, your audience will know it the second you begin your speech. Here are some hints to help you get ready.

1. Write out your speech before you give it.
2. Practice giving your speech several times.
3. Copy the most important ideas in your speech on easy-to-read note cards.
4. Know what you are talking about.

BEING AN EFFECTIVE SPEAKER

You must concentrate on the following areas in order to give a good speech.

Voice

Your voice should be strong enough to reach the last row of seats wherever you are presenting your speech. But using your voice is more than making it loud enough to be heard. You should be understood. Pronounce your words clearly. At times, change the level of your voice. Put emotion into your voice. You don't want to sound like a robot!

Eye Contact

Try this experiment. Talk to your friends but never look at them directly. How did they react? Not too well, I suspect. It's frustrating to listen to someone who never looks you in the eye. Make sure you look at your audience as you speak. Don't ignore any part of your audience. Scan the room from side to side and front to back.

Poise

If you look confident, you'll do well. Remember, everyone gets nervous! Just don't let your nervousness interfere with doing a good job.

Posture

You should stand straight but not stiffly. Don't lean against the chalkboard. Put your hands at your sides. Relax.

Remember the more times you speak in front of others, the easier it will be.

ALAN FRIEDENBERG, Principal, Malibu and Santa Monica School District. He is the author of a series of books for public speaking entitled *Stand Up and Speak!*

LOOKING BACK

Continued from 21

grumbling about the loads of boring homework imposed by honors and AP courses. However, my early years in GATE had taught me to be unafraid of challenge. I took every honors and Advanced Placement class offered at my school, and I was disappointed by only one of those—another instance where an enthusiastic reputable educator had been succeeded by a teacher with little or no experience in gifted education.

On the whole, these advanced classes challenged and excited me. Perhaps they involved more homework than regular classes, but they definitely were not boring. They required more learning, more discussion, more questioning than other classes. The teachers were enthusiastic, innovative, and open to suggestions from students. Not only did they gladly stay after school to answer questions about course material, but they also helped solve scheduling conflicts and gave advice about college and career plans. I especially appreciated their support and availability when my guidance counselor shrugged off my concerns saying, "I don't worry about smart kids like you."

The problems that gifted students face—having to choose among many interests and abilities, balancing leadership tendencies and cooperative skills, withstanding peer pressure, and coping with teachers unfamiliar with students' needs—don't go away. But an effective GATE program helps students develop the skills they need to deal with these problems, especially at the tender elementary school level, when all too often, most grouping for learning is based solely on grade level. At all age levels, gifted education can shape a student's development—teaching lessons on school curriculum and lessons on life. ■

AMANDA DOHERTY, is a 1997 graduate of Shasta High in Redding. She will be attending University of California Davis this fall as a Regent Scholar. Amanda was a 1992 recipient of a CAG student scholarship and winner of the 1997 CAG logo contest.

Great speeches are carefully written. Choice of words, their arrangement and the use of the tools of rhetoric—like hyperbole, antithesis, repetition, alliteration, and the rhetorical question—can make the difference between a forgotten or immortal speech and orator.

Winston Churchill, addressing the British nation during World War II
"Never in the course of human events have so many owed so much to so few."

Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address
"...government of the people, by the people, for the people..."

John F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address
"Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."

Senator George Graham, speech before a jury
"When all other friends desert, he remains."

Douglas MacArthur
"...old soldiers never die, they just fade away."

Sojourner Truth, speaking at the 1851 Ohio Women's Rights Convention
"And ain't I a woman? Look at me!"

Franklin D. Roosevelt, asking Congress to declare war on Japan
"Yesterday, December 7, 1941—a date that will live in infamy..."

Martin Luther King, Jr., speaking at the Washington peace march
"I have a dream, that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

TEACHERS

Would you like to integrate a speech unit into social studies? Try the Interact simulation entitled *Forum*. You may purchase this simulation through Interaction Publishers, Box 997, Lakeside, CA 92040.

Hightly Gifted Students Use the Arts as a Means of Self-Expression

BY CONNIE HOOD

Teachers are seekers. Teachers make continuous efforts to understand the mind and the senses, both to identify and develop genius, and to provide support when learning is difficult. Gifted students are seekers, too. Their active minds are looking for order and understanding in the world around them. They need to accept their own creativity, intuition, and insight. They are expected to become lifelong learners and productive citizens.

Effective use of the visual and performing arts can teach students to communicate what they think and feel, to unlock blocked understanding, and to build an interest and joy in learning.

Tom, a highly gifted eight-year-old, had great difficulty in the area of reading comprehension. Toward the end of the year, his creative writing portfolio was filled with nearly blank papers. Although he was capable of nearly instantaneous mathematical calculations, even the simplest word problem stumped him. He had been referred for ESL evaluation because it was evident that at some fundamental level, he was not able to manage listening or language.

One Friday in May, an origami unit was introduced during math, as an adjunct to geometry and fractions. The student's first experience was to fold a box and lid from recycled papers. At first, Tom reacted with frustration, but he was willing to follow the discussion of halves, quarters, and the relationship between shapes. Suddenly, a little box appeared in his hands.

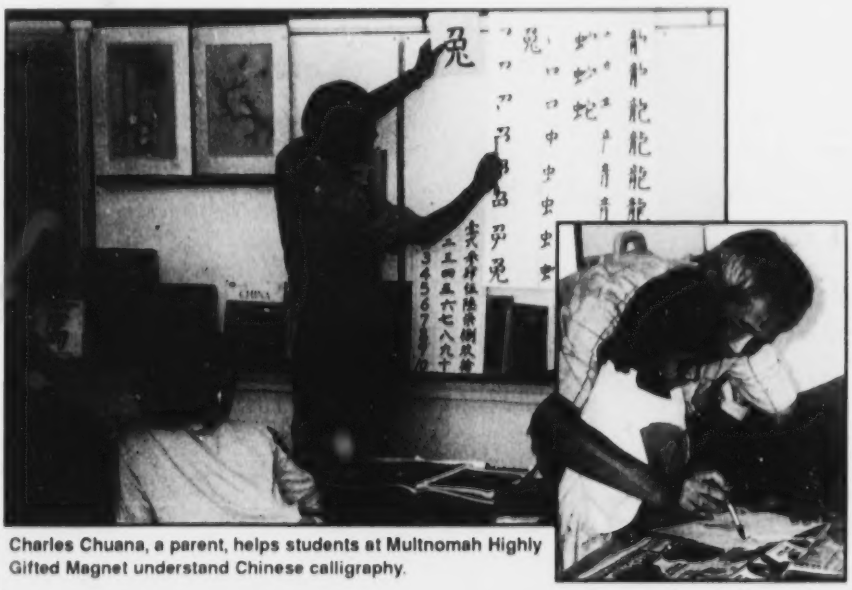
The following Monday, a backpack full of little boxes, folded ball, and birds was presented. Within a week, he was folding dinosaurs with articulating limbs. For Tom, the spatial experience had opened up his imagination.

Another classmate, Jack, was having a similar breakthrough at the same time. Jack was speech emergent, and had no identifiable academic skills in either English or his home language. Within a month, both boys began reading, first from manuals of projects with schematics: Legos, models, even computer manuals. They were rewarded with colored paper and began making all sorts of paper sculpture projects: eagles, trees, houses, etc. Within a month, Tom's reading comprehension was at the superior level, and his imaginative written stories often ran two or three pages. Jack went from speech emergent to speaking, reading, and writing at grade level within 60 days.

These powerful experiences stand out because the students were not "artists" nor were they identified as being particularly talented. But without a doubt, their artistic experiences made them into thinkers. Their artistic studies were exacting, disciplined, and intensely focused. By developing competency in a non-verbal area, the boys were able to use an array of knowledge and skills to become problem solvers, and the language followed.

With this idea in mind, Room 10 embarked on an ambitious program for 1996–97. The main content units were directly linked to discipline-based visual and performing arts activities. Sequential units in drawing, musical patterns and rhythms, movement, and acting were presented. The initial rationale was that this method addressed the curriculum by using the multiple intelligences.

Within weeks, the discipline-based arts units were producing results; the studies of pattern simplified spelling, phonics, syllabication, and studies of multiple numbers and fractions became virtually effortless. The students adapted two favorite literature stories into 10-minute class plays, with dialogue in Spanish and English, spoken by young actors with five different home languages. By the end of the year, they had produced six original plays adapted from literature and so-



Charles Chuana, a parent, helps students at Multnomah Highly Gifted Magnet understand Chinese calligraphy.

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cial studies textbooks. In one instance, the story of pioneers meeting Indians became a four-scene play of Indians observing and making peace with pioneers. One of the most powerful results of the drama was the students' understanding of different perspectives and points of view.

The artistic emphasis stimulates the potential of students, and generates a desire to extend knowledge. Until this type of involvement happens, learning is limited. Yuki, a bright seven-year-old, recently illustrated this point. The class had been studying a science unit on habitats, coupled with the geography of the East Coast. Included in the unit were the concepts of autumn, deciduous trees, hibernation, food chains, and other topics of the eastern woodlands. Vocabulary development had included a small unit on poetry.

On Monday, Yuki had a large package covered in black plastic, some extra credit work. The package contained a carton diorama of an eastern woodland scene. The entire scene was constructed with tiny origami animals and trees with cut paper leaves. According to her father, she was interested in the concept of autumn, as well as origami, and had worked for days. Learning did not stop just because it was the weekend. She was engaged in a deep level of thought because she could express all that she had learned and add her own experience, ideas, and aesthetic sense to the process. She could describe, analyze, and interpret any aspect of the classroom thematic material and express the inherent beauty of the cycles of nature. After she created the scene, she extended her ideas into language. "The deer are eating as much as they can. The squirrel is collecting acorns. The rabbits are trying to eat their dinner, and the fox is chasing the rabbits for dinner."

Eric Warren, a CBS Television set designer, visits Connie Hood's classroom as part of Career Day. Mr. Warren also hosted the class during a visit to Paramount Ranch.

The carton diorama of an eastern woodland scene, constructed with tiny origami animals and trees with cut paper leaves, expresses the inherent beauty of the cycles of nature.

When students express their ideas in a creative mode, they are able to describe, analyze, and interpret their viewpoints. Yuki had already worked effectively in the group situation, but her individual thinking defined and deepened her experience.

Interestingly, Yuki is also a piano student. Outstanding scholars have noted a correlation between the development of musical skills, and the development of spatial reasoning. For more than 2,000 years, music has been linked to mathematical thinking. These are the components of technical genius. It is imperative that gifted students be offered opportunities to study both vocal and instrumental music. In early childhood, these studies are explorations. Later, the mental disciplines of music help build inductive reasoning and aesthetic sensibilities. The musical child becomes the musical adult, a balanced intellect with the ability to sense and accept both order and complexity.

Gifted children often have added responsibilities throughout their lifetimes. As scholars, they may be expected to produce works that help define human ideas and events. As leaders, they are expected to be able to communicate with their colleagues and constituents. As workers, they are expected to be insightful and innovative. All of these skills can be taught through the arts.

As a teacher of ungraded, primary, identified highly gifted students, I often feel like I am sitting on a volcano. The energy and power of the students is unmistakable; it seems to radiate off of them. The real task is directing their energy and power into productive learning. This seems to require a lot of trust in creativity and the ability to instruct through a wide range of intelligences. Frequently, natural thought processes evolve in different ways, and curiosities lead the class to new questions. For example, concurrent units on measurements and whales led to hundreds of questions. How big is a whale anyway? Within a month, a life-size whale was painted on the playground with an accurate scale developed by the eight- and nine-year-olds. In addition to math, the students dealt with many ambiguities such as ranges in size, differences in the types of whales, and representations by artists and photographers. The project elicited enthusiasm and pride as well as extensive knowledge about the animals.

In a 1995 *La Opinion* article, a Spanish language reporter spent an afternoon observing visual and performing arts lessons at an East Los Angeles school. In less than two hours, he reported that he had seen music become physics as the students explored the vibrations of simple

homemade instruments. Dance had become an intricate series of mathematical and geometric forms as the students counted steps and assessed their placement in time and space. The article contained more than a dozen examples of the engagement of the total intellect of students.

Ten years ago, educators were awed by the implications of the theory of multiple intelligences presented by Howard Gardner at Harvard University. Gardner proposed that there are multiple areas of intelligence, and that the existing educational model addressed only two of those ways of learning, verbal and mathematical.

It is the responsibility of the educator to teach using words, quantitative information, visual and musical patterns, movement, introspection, and cooperation with others. It is imperative that educators adapt each lesson to meet the combined needs of each child; by facilitating the students' development of a personal body of knowledge and values, educators empower students to be active participants both socially and culturally.

While resting during a visit to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, I overheard four students from the California Institute of Technology talking about their upcoming finals. One of the four students mentioned that he would not be taking one of his finals. The other students immediately assumed that he must be failing the course. Contrarily, he explained that the professor had called him in to his office to tell him that he had already demonstrated mastery of the course content. The conversation went something like this...

> "I can't write very well, and the ideas on the midterm were complicated, so I drew the whole thing," the student said.
>
> "You mean you wrote the paragraphs, and then illustrated?" the professor asked?
>
> "No, actually, I turned in a whole blue book full of sketches."

There was a long silence, and as they walked away, a young woman quietly sighed, "I wish I could draw..."

Isn't it time to make sure that every student has a strong arts background? ■

CONNIE HOOD teaches an ungraded primary class at Multnomah Highly Gifted Elementary Magnet in Los Angeles Unified School District. Her professional credits include costume and scenic design for theater, singing, architectural restoration, and playing the viola. She is the co-founder of the Los Angeles Community Coalition for Music Education, and the co-owner of Travelin' Trunk Theater.

Meeting the Needs of the Visually Talented

BY BARBARA BECKER

All teachers have experienced the visually talented student that stands out as the class artist, the one that can draw anything. It is the child who according to Howard Gardner has the "preconscious sense of form, [the] willingness to explore and to solve problems that arise, [the] capacity to take risks...affective needs, which must be worked out in a symbolic realm—that we find the crucial seeds of the greatest artistic achievement."

Educators recognize the important role that parents can play in developing the artistic talents of their child. Parents can supply the child with a variety of drawing/painting materials and designate a special display area for their children's art (remember the familiar refrigerator gallery). They can visit museums with their children and discuss what they see as well as talking about the work their child has produced. Sometimes parents can even set an example by making an effort themselves to draw. Many times children will never realize their potential artistic abilities unless they are exposed to the possibilities of visual expression. It then becomes the function of the school to expand a child's visual experience by providing materials and equipment not available elsewhere.

According to Al Hurwitz, retired head of the Department of Art Teacher Education at the Maryland Institute College of Art, those children who are talented in the visual arts can be identified by both behavioral characteristics of the child and by characteristics of their artwork.

The behavioral characteristics include:

- **Early evidence**
  Visually gifted children usually begin very young.
- **Emergence through drawing**
  Giftedness first evidences itself through drawing.
- **Rapidity of development**
  Visually gifted children usually progress through the stages of visual development at an accelerated pace.
- **Extended concentration**
  Visually gifted children stay with an artistic problem longer than do other children.
- **Self-directedness**
  Visually gifted children are highly self-motivated and have the drive to work on their own.
- **Art as escape**
  Visually gifted children may use art as an escape from doing difficult or non-gratifying work.
- **Fluency of idea and expression**
  Visually gifted children draw the way most people talk; they visualize events and forms that have not previously existed.
- **Calculating capacity**
  Visually gifted children have a superior ability to utilize past information in new contexts.

The characteristics of the artwork include:

- **Verisimilitude**
  Visually gifted children demonstrate the ability to depict people and other subjects from the environment.
- **Compositional control**
  Compositional structure is deliberate as well as intuitive.
- **Complexity and elaboration**
  Visually gifted children elaborate upon their schemas showing sensitivity to detail and the

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use of memory.

- **Memory and detail**
  Visually gifted children are more inventive in filling pictorial space.
- **Sensitivity to art media**
  Visually gifted children are able to master materials with great technical control.
- **Random improvisation**
  Art is used as an extension of conversation between form and imagination.

Providing programs for these visually talented students is a challenge that is faced by educators at all levels. The question of funding is also a problem. Many schools and school districts are now turning to the private sector for help. The number of programs for the gifted and talented has been growing over the past decade. Special visual and performing arts schools such as the magnet schools found in the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts are examples of such programs. Unfortunately, space is limited in such schools.

The problem that educators face is how to meet the needs of such children in the educational program.

The faculty at Wonderland Avenue School in Los Angeles, kindergarten through fifth grade, have met the challenge by developing an Arts Cadre of interested parents. These parents have attended art methodology workshops. Art units and materials have been developed for them to use. An art schedule is formulated at the beginning of each school year and cadre members are asked to make the yearly commitment to their assigned class. Cadre volunteers meet and plan with teachers in order to integrate the visual arts with the academic curriculum. Visual arts is taught on a regular weekly basis in all 16 classes. At the end of the school year, an Annual Festival of Student Art is held to showcase the year's work in a dramatic floor to ceiling display.

Other ways schools have used to meet the needs of the visually talented are through establishing after-school art clubs, using pull-out approaches, artist-in-residence programs, and providing field trips and classes at local museums. The California Arts Project (TCAP), one of the many subject matter projects run throughout the state, is an excellent way teachers can become more involved in teaching the arts. ■

BARBARA BECKER, magnet coordinator at Wonderland Gifted/High Ability Magnet School in Los Angeles Unified School District, is a visual arts specialist who is actively involved with TCAP, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's "Evenings for Educators" program, and teaching art education for both the District Intern Program and at local universities.

HANDS-ON CURRICULUM

Art Lesson: Drawing

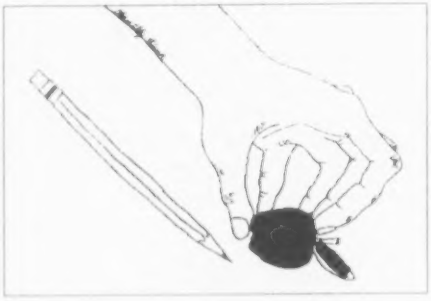
BY BARBARA BECKER

Topic

Contour Line Drawing

Objectives

- Students will observe and discuss the physical characteristics of the human hand.
- Students will create a contour line drawing of a hand using pencil and ink.



Materials

Pencils, newsprint, drawing paper, fine felt tip markers

Sequence of Instruction (Motivation, Guided Group Practice)

1. Students study their hands carefully and discuss what they see.
2. Teacher explains that an ant has just fallen into a bottle of ink and is now crawling over their hands leaving a trail. They will be drawing the trail the ant is leaving on their hands.
3. Teacher demonstrates on a chalkboard or large sheet of paper how to do a contour line drawing of a hand.
4. First using pencil, and then fine felt tip markers, students complete a contour line drawing of their hands in different positions.

Extension Activities

1. Students draw flowers, shoes, wrinkled paper bags, and other objects using contour line drawings.
2. Show and discuss the delicate line drawings of the masters such as Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Rubens, and Picasso.

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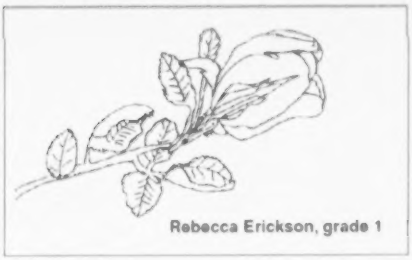
Art Vocabulary

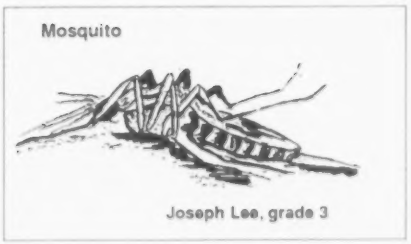
Contour line, interior space, exterior space, shape, form

Evaluation with Students

1. How did you express the special qualities of your hand?
2. How do contour lines help to draw things more realistically?



Rebecca Erickson, grade 1



Mosquito

Joseph Lee, grade 3

Art Resources

Magazines

Arts and Activities
P. O. Box 85103
Santa Monica, CA 92186-9932

Art-to-Zoo (FREE quarterly teaching guide)
Smithsonian Institution
Office of Education
Arts and Industries Building 1163
MRC402
Washington, DC 20560
http://educate.si.edu/lessons/art-to-zoo/azindex.html

School Arts
50 Portland St.
Worcester, MA 01615-9959

Books

Wilson, B., Horwitz, A., & Wilson, M. *Teaching Drawing from Art.* Worcester, MA: Davis Publications, Inc.

Kids in Motion

A Visual Arts Enrichment Program

BY LORI CASAS

Children have limited exposure to art in today's school system, and are introduced primarily to our famous forefathers in art history. By bringing to life some of the more influential current artists, Kids in Motion opens the imaginations and stimulates the visual needs of students on a much larger scale.

The philosophy of the Kids in Motion visual arts program is that children should be stimulated in their imagination and critical thinking skills while being taught artistic concepts and techniques through various mediums.

One of the many programs offered to meet this criteria is the Modern Art Series where students learn about today's artists. In this course, students gain a heightened awareness of how the artwork of people living in the students' communities has influenced the world. The series also shows students that their artistic interests may lead them beyond a recreational level to professional career opportunities. Children need to understand that it is possible to achieve recognition and great success while still alive, and that the people who continue to influence the art fields are both men and women.

Through a sequential university-level curriculum, students are introduced to many different topics and artists for a 6 to 12 week period. The program is tailored to meet individual school needs and age levels.

Jennifer Bartlett is one artist introduced in the Modern Artist Series. The lesson's objective is on visual perspective. By teaching students about Bartlett's concepts of perspective freedom, children are encouraged to express themselves in a variety of ways. This process enables students to expand their creative problem-solving skills far beyond their previous capabilities. Using such perceptive skills stretches the imagination, allowing deeper areas of the brain to be utilized. This empowerment is discussed by comparing and contrasting the *act of creation* to creations by such notable scientists as Albert Einstein and Jonas Salk. ■

LORI CASAS is administrator for Kids in Motion Enrichment Programs. Kids in Motion provides after school enrichment, theater, camps, and artist-in-residence programs in a variety of areas including fine arts, gymnastics, karate, and science. For further information, contact Lori Casas at (818) 727-7878.

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HANDS-ON CURRICULUM

Jennifer Bartlett

From: Kids in Motion's
Modern Artists Series

Editor's Note: Jennifer Bartlett's work is a good visual way to introduce complexity into the differentiated curriculum. By definition, her work exemplifies the concept of different perspectives.

Artist's Background

Jennifer Bartlett is an exciting artist who creates art in a very different way from everyone else. Instead of painting on canvas, Bartlett would use enamel paints on one-foot squares of steel. She paints very simple shapes in a variety of ways. A mountain, an ocean, or a house can be repeated many times using straight lines, dots, strokes, or curved lines; this process shows the same shape from many different perspectives. Some of Bartlett's works have hundreds of steel plates in just one painting, measuring up to 153 feet long! It took up every single wall in the gallery!

Bartlett would begin with very simple drawings of a triangle, circle, tree, mountain, house, or ocean. Her brush strokes were made up of dots, strokes, straight lines, and curved lines. She liked the idea that you can take one simple shape, and repeat that one shape over and over again by drawing and painting it in lots of different ways. She felt that her way of creating works of art allowed her freedom and variety. Because of all the different squares, she could never get stuck on just one way of expression.

Bartlett was born in Long Beach, California on March 14, 1941. She studied art at Mills College in Oakland and Yale University. She now lives in New York City. She shows her paintings in many famous museums and galleries all over the world.

Objectives

- The students will draw and paint on five squares, choosing a simple shape and depicting night, day, straight lines, curved lines, etc.

Materials

- Poster board to resemble the steel squares used by Bartlett
- Watercolors and markers as substitues for enamel paints

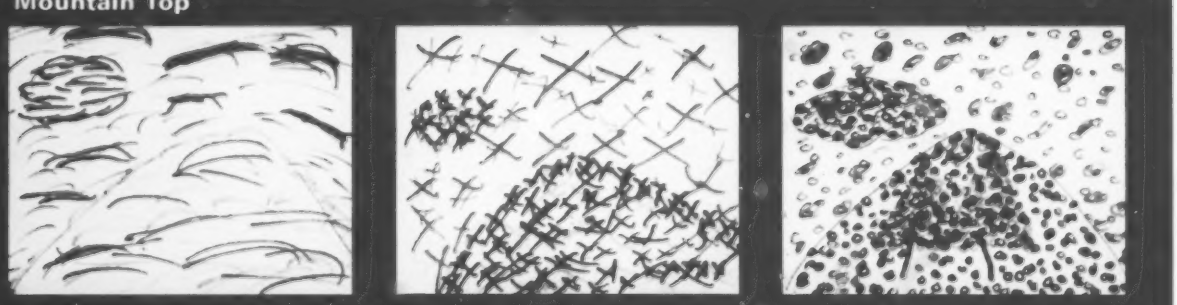
Instructions

1. Review artist's background with students. Encourage them to read this information later with their parents.
2. Give each child 4 to 5 pieces of precut 4" x 5" poster board and one 22" x 6" contrasting color poster board for matting.
3. Have students choose a shape or theme that will be displayed in each plate. Examples: triangle, waves, squares, house, circles, etc.
4. Students should draw their chosen shape on each plate using a different perspective in each plate. Encourage students to use several different mediums and techniques to display variety. Suggested variations include: pointillism, brush strokes, lines, varying colors, charcoal, markers, pencils, colored pencils, and more.
5. Frame each plate by pasting them onto the contrasting color mat.
6. Remind students to write their names on the back.

Editor's Note: This idea could be used to conclude an art history unit with students drawing a simple shape such as a tree and flower and then creating plates based on the techniques of different artists such as: Monet, Van Gogh, O'Keeffe, Matisse or different periods such as impressionism, pointillism, Fauvism, etc. To emphasize the style, large cardboard pieces may be chosen.

—Lori Casas and Diane Kurnick

Mountain Top



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Opening the Language GATE for Minority Students

Oxnard ELD/GATE: Serving Underrepresented Language Minority Youth

BY BARBARA D'INCAU AND LYDIA CRUZ-MACHLITT

At both the national and state levels, considerable attention has been devoted in recent years to developing gifted potential in underserved populations (Smith, 1991; Frasier & Passow, 1994). Howard-Hamilton and Franks (1995) noted that culturally diverse children fall between the cracks with regard to gifted identification and service. Tallent-Runnels and Martin (1992) found that students identified for gifted programs "continue to be disproportionately Caucasian children regardless of the demographic ethnicity of the school" (p. 939).

In California, enrollment in grades K–12 reflects increasing student diversity. Of the 5,314,025 students in California's public schools in 1994–95, approximately six percent were identified as gifted and talented (Barkett, 1995). Students identified as gifted by ethnicity in California in 1994–95 were as follows: 11.1% of California's Asian students were designated as gifted, 8.1% of Filipino students, 6.3% of Pacific Islander students, and 8.6% of white students (Barkett, 1995). Barkett (1995) indicated that Native American students with 4.2% identified, Hispanic students with 2.6% identified, and African-American students with 3.3% identified, made up the underrepresented groups in California's GATE population. Although figures are not available, it is likely that language minority students are underrepresented in programs for the gifted as well.

The population of students of limited English proficiency is increasing, having risen nationally by 52% between 1986 and 1991 (Fix and Zimmerman, 1993, cited in Rapp, 1997). Rapp (1997) observed that "although the number of students with LEP is growing, the number of programs helping them to achieve is not" (p. 21). Students whose home language is not English are 1.5 times more likely to drop out of school than are English proficient students (McCollum, 1991, cited in Rapp, 1997). In the literature on language minority youth, emphasis is placed on the at-risk student groups with considerably less attention given to the very able. The thinking among teachers appears to be that these capable children will make it on their own, with or without specialized instruction to meet their unique abilities and needs.

Background of the Project

Within the Oxnard School District, underrepresentation of Hispanic/Latino pupils and students of limited English proficiency in the GATE program has been a concern as well. The district, which is largely Latino, has made a concerted effort to increase the number of Hispanic/Latino and language minority pupils served in classrooms for the gifted. In Oxnard, where the number of Hispanic/Latino students had grown to 76% in 1994–95, GATE identified Latino pupils had gained from 27% in 1987 to 47% by 1994–95, and remained static during the 1995–96 school year. Historically, referrals of Caucasian and Asian pupils for GATE have disproportionately outnumbered referrals of Hispanic and limited English proficient students, impacting identification rates.

Gifted education begins with the referral and identification processes, which, although critical to the issues of ethnic and linguistic underrepresentation, are beyond the scope of this article. The procedures for encouraging teachers to think about the ways in which language minority pupils might display their talents and the process of identifying them as gifted learners, however, are inseparably linked with the general education program offered as well as the differentiated curriculum and learning experiences designed for GATE students. To focus on identification of students of limited English proficiency as gifted learners addresses only half of the picture if there is no designated program in place to serve them.

In July, 1987, the board of trustees of the Oxnard School District in collaboration with the assistant superintendent of instructional services and the GATE coordinator, determined that a primary grade English language development class would be added to the second through sixth grade self-contained GATE program. An ELD/GATE steering committee was formed jointly within the departments of English language development and GATE to study bilingual GATE issues and to make recommendations to the board of trustees. After examining identification and programming practices, the committee recommended formation of a combined second and third grade GATE/English language development class. The class would accommodate gifted students whose

home language was Spanish.

Students for this self-contained class were selected by a multidimensional assessment process and were qualified according to one of four district-established criteria: intellectually gifted, academically talented, combined intellect and achievement, or GATE potential. Students who received strong teacher recommendations and displayed a variety of characteristics of gifted learners but did not quite meet eligibility standards made up the GATE potential group. It was anticipated that, given a differentiated and accelerated curriculum, these students would meet established GATE eligibility by the end of two academic years. Lydia Cruz-Machlitt was selected to teach the ELD/GATE potential class. She holds a bilingual credential (BCLAD) and had 16 years experience as a bilingual educator with six of those years as a teacher of the gifted. She was selected four times by her peers as exemplary teacher and teacher of the year and was also voted teacher of the year by the Tri-County GATE Council.

The Project

The ELD/GATE potential class opened in the fall of 1994 with 29 Spanish-dominant students. The curriculum followed the taxonomy recommended by the California Association for the Gifted and included accelerated and differentiated strategies which encompass complexity, novelty, depth, and development of critical thinking skills (Kaplan, 1986). The program philosophy incorporated the recommendations of a six year study by Gregory, Starnes, and Blaylock (1988) on the identification and nurturing of exceptional Black and Hispanic students. That study found that gifted minority students are a diverse group within themselves. Many have limited English proficiency or basic skills deficits, but more importantly, these students are likely to have different experiences, or a lack of experience, which distances them from mainstream learners. In Oxnard, the GATE potential students had not traveled, visited museums, or been exposed to technology. Their life experiences, while indicating gifted potential, did not easily translate into academic achievement. The primary recommendation of the Gregory et al. (1988) study which was addressed by the ELD/GATE potential class was that these students require early identification and an appropriately enriching and challenging educational experience that nurtures their abilities while developing basic and advanced academic skills.

Further, Gregory et al. (1988) suggested that the most nurturing programs focus heavily on development of language arts skills. Science and social studies provide the content vehicles for hands-on experiential learning to supplement comprehension and linguistic development. In the first year of working with the students, Cruz-Machlitt observed that while they learned quickly and retained information, they lacked both common and subject specific vocabulary in their primary language. Divergent experiences had to be provided in order to give the students background knowledge for understanding more complex data.

Using the rich content of animals, a high interest area for the children, and the domain of science, Cruz-Machlitt designed a zoology unit of study to develop talent, academic skills, and critical thinking. The broader goals were to provide vocabulary development in Spanish and English, encourage detail and complexity in oral and written expression, enhance personal and social responsibility, and move toward English transition by building an experiential foundation onto which language structures were superimposed. The research-based instructional strategies of Farnan, Flood, and Lapp (1994) were used to help the children construct meaning globally, through experiences such as field trips and visits by expert speakers, and then a variety of strategies were utilized to promote comprehension and language production. For example, activities and subunits of study were previewed with new vocabulary presented in Spanish and English. Multiple texts were used to give students material in a variety of formats and levels of difficulty from which to build a repertoire of concepts and vocabulary. Webbing, concept mapping, and semantic mapping (Farnan, Flood, and Lapp, 1994) were also used to connect discrete areas of knowledge. Although the project's primary content domain was science, activities were designed to integrate other content areas including math, language arts, social studies, and English as a Second Language (ESL). Table 1, Curricular Experiences, illustrates the activities and outcomes of the zoology unit.

Evaluation of the Project

Evaluation of student outcomes was multifaceted and ongoing. Beginning with observations and notes about each student's experiences, content knowledge, and deficits, the units of study were built to fill in gaps as well as require application, evaluation, and synthesis of knowledge. Large group, small group, and individual projects were designed. The zoology unit began with a pretest, and the same assessment was given nine months later. Students were permitted to write in Spanish or English. On the pretest, many of the students wrote in Spanish in contrast to the post-test, on which all answered in English. A sample of two students' work on the pretest/post-test measure is

given in Figures 1 and 2.

Additional evaluation was in the form of student portfolios, which the students shared with their parents at the culmination of the project at a specially designated class open house. Writing samples, graphs and charts, research reports, hypothesis generation, and illustrations were among the work contained in the portfolios. Written products were both in Spanish and English, demonstrating the development of balanced bilingualism. Students also shared and explained their science projects to parents and school personnel.

In the original evaluation design, students were to have two academic years in which to develop their GATE potential before participating in the formal GATE assessment process. On the recommendation of the teacher, parent permission was obtained for 27 of the 29 students to take the Standard Progressive Matrices (Raven, 1976), a measure of general conceptual and nonverbal reasoning, in addition to the district administered Spanish Assessment of Basic Education (SABE) at the end of the first year of the project. Twenty-four of the 27 students met eligibility and were formally reclassified as GATE (no longer GATE potential) pupils. Twenty-seven of the students also met district criteria for language redesignation and were reclassified as Fluent English Proficient (FEP). On the formal parent evaluation of the GATE program, parents gave the class-

Table 1. Curricular Experiences

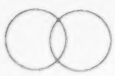
Math	Language Arts	Social Studies	Science	ESL	Culminating Activities
Problem solving	Keep a portfolio	Habitats - books, videos, etc.	Living vs. non-living things	Vocabulary	Complete portfolios
Measurement (food, water, growth, etc.)	Daily reflection - journal writing	Taking care of animals	Speakers: entomologist, zoologist, etc.	Stories	Take animals home on weekends
Estimation	Oral reports based on 7 intelligences	Different points of view: hunter, zoologist, animals, people, etc.	Classification: comparison charts	Hands-on activities	Field trips: LA Zoo, Channel Islands Museum, Ojai Valley, Carpenteria Beach, Ventura County Fair, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
Stay within budget	Tableaux, plays, readers theater	Issues: advantages, disadvantages animal rights, endangered and extinct species	Experiments: Use of the scientific method	Songs	Parents as speakers
Mathland unit: Multiplication Graphing	Songs and poetry Vocabulary		Science Fair Food chain	Videos Zoobooks	Camino Real Outreach Program Carnival - "Go Fish Booth"
	Literature: *Charlotte's Web, Badger Claws of Ojai, Stone Fox, Island of the Blue Dolphins*		Life cycles	Games	Author's Faire book display
	Writing and publishing books with animal characters		Observe and record animal behavior		T-shirts with animal logos
	Library research		Knowledge pre- and post-test		Extend critical thinking: What behaviors have humans copied from animals (e.g., flying)
			Library research graphs Comparison charts, classificatio charts		

Figure 1. Pretest: Zoology Science Examination

(The pretest was written in Spanish.)

1. **Draw a Venn diagram and explain three similarities and three differences between living and non-living things:**

   Student A:



rock	elephant
mineral	animal
no life	has life
rough	not as rough
you find it in the ground	it's not in the ground

   Student B: (No diagram. Answers were in Spanish.)
   "I don't know."

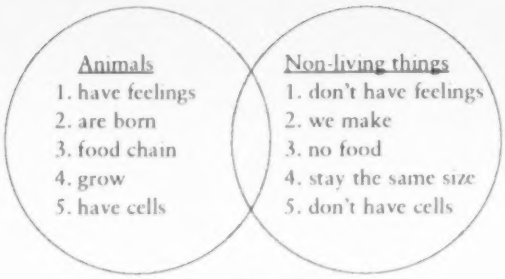
2. **Explain two different scientific ways for classifying animals. Write a paragraph explaining which is your favorite classification method and why.**

   Students A and B:
   "I don't know."

Figure 2. Post-test: Zoology Science Examination

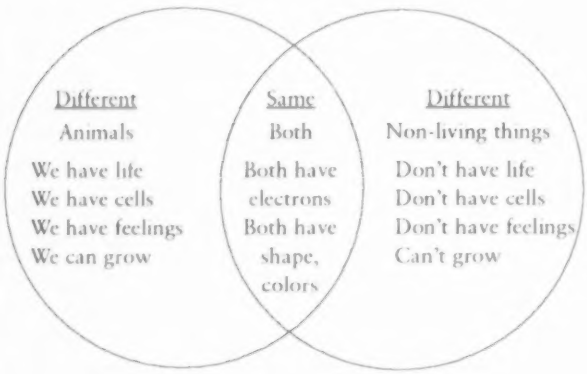
1. **Draw a Venn diagram and explain three similarities and three differences between living and non-living things:**

   Student A:



1. have cells, atoms
2. take up space
3. have gravity

   Student B: (All answers were written in English.)



2. **Explain two different scientific ways for classifying animals. Write a paragraph explaining which is your favorite classification method and why.**

   Student A: Two ways animals are classified are by caracteristics [sic] and by the blood. My favorite way is by caracteristics, because it's easyer [sic] to remember and it's the most common way. Like mammals, they are warm blooded, have hair or fur, are born alive, mothers nurs [sic] and more. But it doesn't matter size, shape, or color. Also, usually the group looks the same because they have the same caracteristics.

   Student B: Ways of classifying animals are by kinds of blood and by vertebrate and non-vertebrate animals. Vertebrate means animals that have backbone. Some kinds of vertebrates are the sea oter [sic], the fish, the turtle, the dolphins and birds. Some kinds of non-vertebrate animals are the sea anemone, jelly fish, sea star, butterflies and bees.

(Students' responses to questions 3 and 4 were omitted due to space, however the questions are listed here to illustrate the application and analysis required of students.)

Continued on page 35

room, teacher, and program their highest rating (5 on a scale of 1 to 5). Parent comments praised their students' gains in science and also mathematics. Three of the students were selected to address the district's Board of Trustees on the value of science in the second and third grade. All three students spoke in proficient English.

Summary

The ELD/GATE potential class and the integrated zoology unit are examples of the Oxnard School District and one teacher's efforts to develop the talents and meet the needs of students whose home language is Spanish. The major limitation of the project is its scope: the project involved only one teacher and one group of students. The degree to which this program and its outcomes can be replicated depend heavily on selection of the teacher and students. While GATE potential students of limited English proficiency exist in all districts in California, recruitment of credentialed bilingual teachers who have been trained in implementation of instructional methodology appropriate for GATE learners remains a critical need in Oxnard and many other school districts throughout California. It is the hope of the authors that this program will

Figure 2. Post-test: Zoology Science Examination (cont.)

3. If you were an entomologist, what would you tell your parents in a letter to convince them that insects are important?

4. Describe and give two examples of each of the following:
amphibians; reptiles; insects; mammals; fish; birds

5. Choose 5A or 5B:

5A.
Write a paragraph expressing your opinion about endangered species. Make sure that you include at least two examples of animals considered endangered and interesting details that support your main idea.

5B.
Do you think it is better for an animal to live in a zoo, circus, or its natural habitat? Write a paragraph and include details to support your main idea.

Student A:
(5B)
Zoo
I think it's better that animals like the gorilla or California condor to live in a zoo. In the zoo the animals are protected by [sic] anything that might harm them. They are given food when they are supposed to eat. Animals get shelter to protect them from rain, snow, or anything else. They have the company of other animals and have everything they would have in their natural home. That's why I think it's better at the zoo.

Student B:
(5B)
Natural habitat
I think it's better for an animal to live in its natural habitat because they could live their own way and they would be happyer [sic]. We could go watch them in national parks. I think that they would live more living their own way. Also they would have more space. They could eat as much as they wanted. What if somebody wanted to live in another way? We wouldn't be happy. So they need to have their own way too. I really think they should live in their natural habitat.

inspire bilingual teachers to employ differentiated teaching strategies with their most capable learners. Further, district personnel are encouraged to undertake studies of their own with diverse populations to add to the body of literature on culturally and linguistically appropriate pedagogy. ■

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HONORING OUR ANCESTORS

Celebrating the Latin American Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)

BY ROBBIE WEDEEN

What is the Day of the Dead?

This little-known cultural celebration takes place every November 1 and 2 in most Latin-American countries as well as in the Southwestern United States. Often confused with American Halloween celebrations, this festival is, in fact, very distinct. The Day of the Dead combines the traditions of indigenous New World cultures with European traditions to focus on the memory of a family's ancestors. In Catholic countries, it is called All Souls' Day, and it is celebrated as a national holiday in Spain. Spanish settlers introduced the celebration to America, and European traditions became intertwined with Native American beliefs. No place was this combination more apparent than in Mexico, where the holiday is celebrated in manic proportions with both Aztec and Spanish customs observed.

The festival is fun-filled as evidenced by this visitor to Olive View Middle School

The "Procession of Spirits" enters the Mark Taper Forum.

Rather than being spooky or macabre, as is Halloween, the festival is fun-filled and has none of the American inhibitions surrounding death. Families picnic at the grave sites of their ancestors. Children play with toy skeletons and coffins. Relatives serve special foods and decorate loved ones' tombs with flowers. In homes, an altar honoring a special ancestor is set up and the spirit of the deceased is said to come back to visit. The altar contains the loved ones' favorite foods as well as objects pertaining to the festival.

Integrating the Curriculum

To create a classroom celebration of the Day of the Dead, teachers can incorporate the festival into a multicultural thematic unit integrating several curricular areas. The theme can be aligned with grade-level standards in the areas of language arts, social science, science, and visual and performing arts. The writing process can be utilized by allowing students to write about their ancestors, or about a historical person chosen by consensus. For example, one classroom created a tribute to Dr. Seuss, another to Hollywood movie starts from the past. At San Fernando Middle School in Los Angeles, bilingual coordinator Olivia Robledo dedicated a library display. Classrooms of students were invited into the library to hear Robledo's explanation of the traditions of the holiday and of the display. Students contributed by writing a short paragraph in memory of the author or a paragraph of one of their own deceased family members and the memorials were posted on or near the offering (la ofrenda).

To integrate various curricular strands, student work can include:

- studying the geography of Mexico or of Latin America,
- tracing the route of the explorers from Europe,
- studying the encounter of Europeans with Native Americans,
- discovering similarities and differences between Aztec and Spanish cultures,
- researching cultural conflicts and their resolutions,
- comparing and contrasting the Day of the Dead with Halloween,
- researching the historical roots of each of the holidays,
- writing about the various cultures and how the day is celebrated today,
- writing about their own families and ancestors, and

- researching various historical figures to which students dedicate the altar.

Since the skeleton (la calavera) is such a symbolic part of the Day of the Dead, students can learn parts of the skeleton for science. The skeleton can be used for ESL students to learn parts of the body. The artwork of Mexican artists such as Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo is often studied along with the Day of the Dead, and their works can be displayed along with examples of the folk art that surrounds the holiday. Students can prepare the bread of the dead (pan del muerto) and can grow their own marigolds (cempasuchiles), the traditional flower of the dead. Writing projects can focus on the family, on explorers, or on the contrast of cultures. *The Day of the Dead* by José Luis Orozco and Camille Saint-Saens' *Danse Macabre* can be used for music instruction. As extension activities, students can research similar celebrations among other ethnic groups. Both fiction and nonfiction literature sources are available for class reading and research.

Creating an Altar

To construct an altar (un altar) in the classroom or school library, a number of traditions must be observed. There are many interpretations of the symbolism involved in the altar and its offerings.

1. The altar must have four levels. Each level can be said to symbolize one of the four levels of the Aztec afterworld or one of the four elements: earth, wind, fire, and water.

2. A preColumbian type of dog (el excuintle) must be present to guide and protect the spirit that comes to visit.

3. Coins should be present to pay the dog.

4. A glass of water must be placed on the altar for the spirit to drink after the long journey.

5. A carpet is placed on the floor in front of the altar so that the spirit can rest.

6. The bright gold color and strong, pungent smell of marigolds also help guide the spirit to the altar.

7. Candles light the way.

8. The spirit's favorite food must be placed in the offering to appease the spirit's hunger.

9. Traditional offerings of atole, chocolate, and fruit are also important.

10. A photograph of the loved one is placed on the altar.

11. Traditional colors of purple, symbolizing mourning (Aztec) and royalty (Spanish), and orange must be present.

12. Cut paper (papel picado) is used for decoration.

13. An arch is constructed over the altar.

14. Although depictions of the Virgin Mary and the cross are traditionally part of the ritual, these objects can be eliminated if the depiction of religious objects is unacceptable at your school.

Ideas for Activities

Ideas for group or individual assignments include:

- Design a shadow-box altar using a shoe box. Into it, place a picture of the person you are honoring, miniatures of some of their favorite objects and food, and miniatures of items related to the holiday.

- Imagine that you are a field anthropologist studying an archeological site containing both Spanish and Aztec artifacts. Describe the items you encounter and decide from which culture they might have originated. Find out if any of the objects have significance related to Day of the Dead.

San Fernando Middle School dedicated the library display to author José Antonio Burciaga.

- Research the rituals and symbols associated with Halloween and compare and contrast them to those accompanying the Day of the Dead. Graphically present your findings using a Venn diagram.

- Investigate your ancestry. Make a family tree going back at least three generations, stating who the family member is or was, when they were born, and where they were from.

- Be a cultural geographer and "visit" Michoacán, or Oaxaca, Mexico, during the Days of the Dead. Keep a travel journal with illustrations of your observations to present to your colleagues.

- Study other cultures such as Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Native North American, and African. Discover how these other cultures remember and honor their ancestors. Make a chart of your findings.

- Examine the folk art associated with the Day of the Dead. Determine whether the artwork is used for ritual, decoration, play, or a combination of these. Choose a type of artwork, such as papel picado, and make or draw your own sample. ■

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HANDS-ON CURRICULUM

CALAVERAS

BY ROBBIE WEDEEN

The lesson plan for the calavera is designed to meet the following California Department of Education language arts standards for fourth grade, seventh grade, and high school:

- The student reads, extensively and in depth, from a diverse collection of text and other materials of the quality illustrated in the district's grade-level reading lists.
- The student organizes thoughts and information for writing, develops drafts, analyzes, edits, and revises work as appropriate for audience and purpose.
- The student writes effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences, developing style and voice.

Calaveras

Calaveras, literally translated as skulls, are witty or satirical cartoons or commentaries written for friends and celebrities while they are still alive. Generally, these mock epitaphs are published on printed broadsheets, during the Days of the Dead, poking fun at elected officials, members of the ruling class, and other people in the public eye. During the government of Porfirio Diaz, political satirist José Guadalupe Posada became the most widely known calaverista.

***Gran fandango y francachela de todas las calaveras (Happy dance and wild party of all the skeletons)* - A calavera by José Guadalupe Posada**

San Fernando Middle School dedicated the library display to author Jose Antonio Burciaga.

Objective:

Utilizing the writing process, have students write a calavera about a friend or someone at the school. Publish the calaveras in a class broadsheet for Day of the Dead.

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Materials:

- Book showing prints of Posada's work, reference materials on the Day of the Dead and Mexican culture
- Pencils, pens, paper, drawing paper, fine line black markers

Background

This lesson should be implemented after initial discussion and research and explanation of the Day of the Dead has taken place. Previous introduction to satire and political cartoons is also assumed. Teacher may lead discussion to review previously learned concepts and to integrate curricular areas. Brainstorming and clustering of students' ideas motivate participation.

Implementation

1. Teacher introduces the work of José Guadalupe Posada, shows prints, and leads discussion of political satire.
2. Teacher models the writing of a calavera using student-generated ideas. The whole class writes, revises, and charts the class calavera.
3. Students work in cooperative groups to develop their own ideas for a calavera, and a group product is generated. Students may add artwork to their written verse. The symbolism of the happy, not spooky, skeleton as a caricature of the person being satirized should be utilized in the cartoon.
4. Students' group projects are proofread, read to the whole class, critiqued, and revised.
5. Student work is published as a broadsheet to accompany Day of the Dead celebrations. ■

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LANGUAGE OF THE DISCIPLINE

Vocabulary Development

English	Spanish
tombstone	tumba
coffin	ataúd
pan de muerto*	pan de muerto
marigold	cempasuchil
atole*	atole
mask	máscara
cactus leaf	hoja de nopal
altar	altar
skull	calavera
cemetery	cementerio
Aztec	Azteca
skeleton	esqueleto
escuintle*	escuintle
saint	santo/santa
candle	vela
paper picado*	papel picado
sugar skull	calavera de azucar
incense burner	incensario
Calavera Catrina*	Calavera Catrina
Calavera Zapatista*	Calavera Zapatista
Don Juan Tenorio	Don Juan Tenorio
Michoacán	Michoacán
pozole*	pozole
bride and groom	los novios
mole*	mole
thumb print	huella del pulgar
bark painting	papel amate
prayer sheet	alfeñique
prayer	oración
tree of life	árbol de vida
ancestors	los antepasados
José Guadalupe Posada*	José Guadalupe Posada

**The Spanish versions of these words are accepted into English usage.*

Dictionary

atole - very thick beverage made of masa, water or milk, crushed fruit and sugar or honey.

Don Juan Tenorio - a play by José Zorilla dramatizing the salvation of Don Juan's soul by his lover

mole - Chocolate sauce. Green mole is for the souls of children; red mole is for the souls of adults.

pozole - thick soup consisting of meat and broth, hominy, onion, garlic, dried chiles and cilantro. Usually served with chopped lettuce, radishes, onions, cheese and cilantro, which diners can add to the soup as they please

pulque - fermented drink made from the milk of the agave cactus

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Thematic Planner

Designed by Barbara Smart, Mentor teacher, Coldwater Canyon Elementary, Los Angeles Unified School District

SOCIAL STUDIES
- Time line
- Map skills
- Globe skills
- Facts summary
- Venn diagrams
- Class discussion

SCIENCE
- Classify
- Compare and contrast
- Brainstorm
- Make predictions
- Flow chart
- Science experiments relating to topic

LITERATURE
- Read books to class
- Choral reading
- Partner reading
- Book list:
- See Theme books
- Literature list
- Read biographies

LANGUAGE ARTS WRITING VOCABULARY
- Chart vocabulary
- Word wall
- Sequence story
- Events
- Journals
- Story mapping
- Student reports
- Clustering
- Class Books

THEME CONCEPT

RESOURCES AUDIO VISUAL
- Videos (school video collection)
- Field trips
- Realia
- Library books
- Magazines
- Textbooks
- Encyclopedias
- Filmstrips
- Picture file
- Theme books

MATH
- Problem solving
- Measurement
- Bar graphs
- Cooking

ART
- Posters
- Murals
- Puppets
- Drawing
- Painting
- Dioramas
- Collage
- Art appreciation

MUSIC/POETRY DRAMA
- School music kits
- Dances
- Act out stories
- Choral reading (especially poetry)
- *See social studies music collection

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Day of the Dead Thematic Planner

Compiled by Robbie Wedeen, Bilingual Advisor, Rosemarie Mercado, Bilingual Adviser, and Rosa Eshaq, Assistant Principal, Castelar Elementary, Los Angeles Unified School District

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Background information Día de los Muertos
- Venn diagram: Compare and contrast Halloween and Day of the Dead or traditions of other cultures
- Investigate Aztec and Spanish traditions
- Research geneology of family members and "roots"

SCIENCE

- Magnet Way The Body: Skeletal System
- Construct paper plate skeletons and label the bones
- Macaroni skeletons (see Art)

LITERATURE

- Choral reading - "Soy un esquelito"
- Read books to class
- Partner reading book list:

  _____

  _____
- Legends
- Storytelling

LANGUAGE ARTS WRITING VOCABULARY

- Skull-shaped book
- Graphic organizer: vocabulary list
- Word wall charts
- BINGO
- Writing: poetry and cartoons, satirical verses, calaveras about well-known people
- Epitaphs (secondary)

THEME

Rituals

Diversity

Roots

CONCEPT

Day of the Dead
Honoring Our Ancestors

RESOURCES AUDIO VISUAL

- Bibliography - student books, literature
- Videos
- Slides
- Photos

MATH

- Measurement Cooking:
  - pan de muerto (difficult)
  - atole (easy)

ART

- Paper-plate skeleton
- Macaroni skeleton
- Cartoon calaveras
- Folk art display
- Potato skull
- Design and draw own altar or make shadow-box altar
- Make papel picados to decorate altar
- Make marigolds to decorate altar
- Design papier mâché masks

MUSIC/POETRY DRAMA

- Dramatize "Soy un esquelito"
- Songs and dances
- Create costumes
- Play: "Don Juan Tenorio"

EDUCATION ONLINE

Continued from 16

nents of this model online course.

UCLA Extension

UCLA Extension and The Home Education Network, have an online catalog of 50 courses offered for Fall 1997. Included in those classes are courses in architecture, astronomy, business, computers, education, various professional preparation programs, writing, and English as a second language. Students complete course work, interact in class discussions, and communicate with the instructor through their home or business computer.

Students participating in these courses represent 44 different states and eight countries. Classes are kept small with usually no more than 20 students in a course. Students can also enroll in class electronically and purchase required textbooks online.

UCLA Extension also offers a program in online teaching. This series of courses covers presentation, instructional design, curriculum development, and other tools for teachers who want to develop online courses. More information about the UCLA Extension online courses can be found at http://www.then.com.

CLASSES OF THE FUTURE?

Is online education the wave of the future? So far some of the benefits of online courses have been discussed. However, there are some drawbacks to online education. Technical problems may occur for both teachers and students. The server may not function properly at a time when students need to meet in a chat room. Students may have technical difficulty sending homework electronically.

Some students and teachers may see online classes as impersonal, lacking the face-to-face interaction. Real-time video and audio over the Internet may alleviate some of these concerns, but very powerful computers and large communication lines are required for this to happen on a wide scale. Even then, some people may prefer to be in a class with others physically present.

Richard McCullough, dean of mathematics, science and engineering at Saddleback College, related to Archibold (1997) that perhaps online education may become an "alternative to regular classroom instruction, not a replacement."

Although most of the online courses referenced in this article are at the college or university level, there is the potential for courses to be developed for younger students. The structure used for online classes in higher education could be replicated for secondary and elementary students. Online courses provide tremendous educational opportunities for students of all ages, but especially for gifted students, who can explore topics not taught in their schools. Online education also has great potential to assist parents who choose to homeschool their children. Online courses can be used to accelerate learning using a medium not dependent on location and enough local students to offer a course. ■

JUDY LIEB, Ed.D., is the coordinator of Educational Technology and Media Services in the Fullerton School District. She is the associate editor for technology for the *Communicator*.

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ED'S OASIS

Continued from 18

penguins for a science unit got distracted by a Web site devoted to the Penguin character from the *Batman* movie. However, finding an Internet treasure is only the first part of the task. Knowing how to use it effectively with students is critical.

Sometimes coaching is all that is needed to carry a good start into a successful start. ED's Oasis provides virtual coaching in the Spotlight area. This section features teachers from around the country sharing their experiences, lesson ideas, and classroom management strategies. Some have shared student work samples and assessment rubrics; others have submitted course outlines and handouts.

Also included in this section are remarks from students. One group of students compared classes that use the Internet to classes that do not, claiming that using telecommunications makes a class more flexible, creative, challenging, and fun. Students say they feel like they are in control of their work, that they are getting a head start on their future careers. A few students from another class wrote that their work with the Spotlight teacher changed their lives and opened up a new world of possibilities. These affirmations not only celebrate the individual teacher's success, but also provide answers to the questions "Is using the Internet worth the effort?" and "Does using the Internet help my students learn?" According to the students themselves, the answer to both questions is "Yes!"

Visitors to ED's Oasis are encouraged to strengthen teacher use of the Internet by coaching each other on the site via discussions and comments about how they have used resources linked in the Treasure Zone. Finally, ED's Oasis contains a collection of

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Internet workshop handouts some of which are created by Oasis staff and others contributed by Oasis visitors.

Putting it to Use

So let us return to Anne, Ben, Cindy, and the others. How can ED's Oasis help them? Once teachers are comfortable with using the Internet, an easy next step is to use it as a visual display with the whole class. Anne, with help from her colleague next door, or through following the "New to the Net" guide on ED's Oasis, might choose to use a site like The Florida Aquarium (http://www.sptimes.com/aquarium/default.html). This site contains beautiful images of the animals and habitats of the Mangrove Forest, coral reefs, and open water areas. There are links to in-depth information, and a few review-type activities that would be fun to use with elementary-age students.

Once Anne is more comfortable with her teaching assignment and the technologies, she might move on to a more interactive use of the Internet. If she needed a language arts focus, she could use the descriptions in the Treasure Zone to choose the Monster Exchange (http://www.csnet.net/minds-eye/). This project invites students to create a monster, describe it, then send the description to their partner class. The partners attempt to recreate the monster by following the written descriptions. The before and after pictures are shared online.

Ben, who teaches a traditional biology class, would probably be drawn to the Biology Place (http://www.biology.com/), especially when he reads that it can be used to augment his proven teaching strategies. ED's Oasis describes this site as one that can be used with the whole class for discussions of scientific current events and issues. It can also be used by small groups for lab data collections, and by individual students for remedial or extra-credit work.

Cindy, Dan, and Eva could benefit both from the Cross-Curricular section of the Treasure Zone, and the Spotlight feature. Designing interdisciplinary units is challenging. If these teachers plan to focus on topics such as explorers, or themes like cycles, systems, and interactions, they can get information from a Brooklyn teacher about how to use the Blue Ice Web site from Online Class (http://www.usinternet.com/onlineclass/) with sixth graders. Blue Ice engages middle school students in a study of Antarctica. It incorporates strands about early and recent explorers, and the arctic ecosystem. Students analyze data, study the impact weather has on the animals, exchange e-mail messages with scientists, artists and explorers, and read the weekly episode journals of courageous explorers.

Finally, Frank, the district's educational technology specialist can use articles in the Guidelines section of ED's Oasis as he works with the technology committee and in his presentations to school boards and community groups. He can use handouts in the Teachers Resources section of the Treasure Zone in staff development workshops. He can use the Treasure Zone as a starting point for introducing teachers to classroom use of the Internet.

While it will never replace a staff development program, ED's Oasis can be a valuable component of a well-balanced teacher-support system. Navigating the Information Superhighway never again needs to make the teacher feel like a character in a bad episode of *Lost in Cyberspace*. The resources, guidelines, Web treasures, role model spotlights and collegial discussions provide both a haven and a beacon. ED's Oasis can help teachers make the Internet an integral part of their classroom. ■

TERRIE GRAY is the director of ED's Oasis and the former Communicator Tech Net editor. She received the CAG May V. Seagoe Scholarship in 1990 and can be reached at tgray@pepperdine.edu.

HIGHLY GIFTED

Continued from 20

The presence of a group of highly gifted students on campus is a powerful asset to any school. Because highly gifted students have such wide-ranging strengths, they will be found in all areas of extracurricular activities: student government, athletics, music, drama, and journalism. The highly gifted students' presence on a campus generally lifts a school's interest and performance in academic excellence. This influence, sometimes subtle, sometimes overt, improves a school's atmosphere and, ultimately, its reputation as a place where parents of all students strive to see their children achieve.

Los Angeles Unified is allowing several high schools to go their own way in formulating programs for the highly gifted. It is an exciting and promising moment. Today there is an opportunity to craft challenging and engaging programs that can, in truth, lift everyone to unprecedented heights. Such opportunities are rare, but advocates of special programs for the especially able should be willing to get their hair mussed a bit in the struggle to see these programs thrive. ■

BRUCE SAUNDERS currently teaches Latin, World History, and U.S. History to highly gifted students in the Individualized Honors Program at Walter Reed Middle School in North Hollywood, CA.

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- ☐ Teacher
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- ☐ Computers
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